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Verbatim Transcript  
June 25, 2004

Senate  
Armed Services Committee  
Committee Hearing

U.S. Senator John Warner (R-VA) Holds a Hearing on Iraq Sovereignty

U.S. SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HOLDS A HEARING ON IRAQ SOVEREIGNTY  
JUNE 25, 2004  
SPEAKERS:

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U.S. SENATOR MARK PRYOR (D-AR)

WITNESSES:

PAUL WOLFOWITZ,  
DEPUTY SECRETARY,  
DEFENSE DEPARTMENT  
RICHARD ARMITAGE,  
DEPUTY SECRETARY,  
STATE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL RICHARD MYERS,  
CHAIRMAN,  
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

WARNER: The committee meets today to receive testimony on the transition to sovereignty in Iraq, now just days away. We welcome our witnesses: Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, General Richard B. Myers.

Our witnesses are well-qualified, well-experienced to discuss this topic, as they've been intimately involved in it now from the

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very beginning. Secretary Wolfowitz, in addition, has just returned days ago from his most recent trip to the region and made your own assessment of this transition.

In five days, the sovereignty of Iraq will pass to an interim Iraq government, as Iraq continues its path to elections in a hopeful democratic future. The past few months have been very challenging, how well we all know, from the continuing involving violence against the coalition military forces, against the new Iraqi government and against innocent civilians -- their own people. We're reminded that Iraq remains a very dangerous place.

In addition, we have witnessed evidence of abusive misconduct by some of a very small number of our troops involved in detention facilities. Our committee will continue to look into these incidents and work with the department to ensure that corrective measures are taken. We cannot allow the misguided actions of a few to tarnish the honorable efforts and achievements of the vast majority of our servicepersons in Iraq and around the world.

We're ever mindful of the risks our troops face every day and the sacrifices made to the families that support them and indeed the communities that support them. The recent brutal murders of innocent civilians, including Americans and other foreign nationals in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, remind us and remind the world of the cruel, depraved nature of those who oppose us in the global war on terrorism.

Those that have been removed from power in Iraq and Afghanistan are seeking to delay their inevitable defeat and prevent others from realizing their hopes for freedom and democracy. We mourn every loss of life, every loss of limb, and salute those who serve and continue to face courage in the cause of freedom with the support of their families and with our support.

The timeliness and importance of this hearing cannot be overstated. We are at a critical juncture for coalition efforts in Iraq. The passage, two weeks ago, of a new U.N. Security Council resolution, 1546, provides the appropriate means to continue our support for efforts to stabilize and democratize Iraq and to encourage increased participation by the rest of the international community in this extraordinary, important endeavor.

As part of this resolution, the U.N. and the new interim government of Iraq have requested the continued presence of a U.S.-led multinational force to assist in establishing security and stability in Iraq so that a democratic political process can continue.

The progress made by our armed forces, together with their coalition partners, presents an opportunity to fully defeat violence and terror in Iraq, a nation whose previous ruler had perpetrated violence and terror on his population, his neighbors, and was a threat to the world.

The cycle of violence that has gripped this part of the world must end if we are to win the global war on terrorism and make America and the world a safer place.

WARNER: Any deviation, any hesitation from our current course will only embolden those who are intent on fomenting instability and anarchy and terrorism.

We've achieved, I think, extraordinary successes in a relatively short period of time. Saddam Hussein and the threat he posed are gone. A new Iraqi government will soon assume power. Infrastructure and institutions are being rebuilt. The future is hopeful for the Iraqi people. How encouraging, this morning, the polls showing the Iraqi people were posing confidence in this new government.

We must continue to send a strong message of resolve to the people of Iraq, to our troops, to our coalition partners and to the rest of the world, that we will stay the course and get the job done. Continued U.S. commitment to Iraq after the June 30th transition is of enormous importance to the Iraqi people and to the region. A free, democratic Iraq means defeat for the forces of terrorism and instability in Iraq.

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Clearly, the recent violence is related to the imminent transfer of sovereignty. Those who fear democracy are trying to delay its arrival. Those who incite terror realize their days are numbered. Opponents of a free, democratic Iraq are desperate and will become even more desperate, likely, in the days ahead. We will stay the course.

The president's action is brave and a consistent one. He is determined we will succeed. We will, and we must. I applaud President Bush for his consistent efforts, efforts that began in September 2002 at the United Nations to build and expand the coalition of nations who have the courage and conviction to fight tyranny and terror in order to make the region and the world a better place and a safer place.

Many countries shared in the effort to liberate Iraq. More are participating in rebuilding Iraq and assisting in building democratic institutions. Currently, 38 nations are involved in this endeavor. We all hope more will join.

This is critically important work that deserves the support of all responsible members of the international community. The entire world will benefit from a success and freedom in that region. We will all suffer in the world if we fail to establish our goals.

I welcome the increased participation of the United Nations in the political transition process and the re-establishment of a U.N.-assisted mission in Iraq. And we share the president's desire as he leaves our shores today to go abroad to join those in Turkey in a NATO conference and to carry with him the message of the prime minister of Iraq to be that he needs help, his people need help. And I am encouraged by the initial response of some of the NATO members.

We have many questions that lie ahead. How will multinational force operations be coordinated with Iraq's security forces and the interim Iraq government after June 30th? What will be the status of U.S. and coalition forces in a sovereign Iraq? And how can those forces be protected from unwarranted or unjustified litigation under the forthcoming Iraqi law?

What steps remain in the process leading to elections of a permanent Iraqi government? What will be the status of ongoing reconstruction activities? What progress has been made in training, equipping, mentoring and [\*\*\*\*] effective Iraqi security forces? And when will they be ready to assume primary responsibility for the internal and external defense of their own nation?

What role will U.S. forces play in the detention of prisoners after the transfer of sovereignty, most importantly including the custody and interrogation of the high-interest prisoners such as Saddam Hussein?

Consequently, this hearing today is a full opportunity for this committee, with those probably best qualified to give us our answers and give the nation and the world the positions of this country. I hope our witnesses can provide insights into these issues.

WARNER: Lasting peace and security in Iraq will be achieved when we establish the conditions for a democratic, economically viable nation. The first steps to democracy have been taken, and a new government is preparing to assume the responsibilities and challenges of freedom and democracy.

This new interim Iraqi government will need the continued support and commitment of the United States Congress, the American people and the international community.

Their success will stand as a beacon of hope to others and a turning point in the war against terrorism and violence.

Senator Levin?

LEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for calling this important hearing.

Over the last few weeks, we have seen movement in Iraq on political matters, with the formation of the interim Iraqi government and the planned transfer of full sovereignty next week.

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Although late in coming, there is finally a real diplomatic effort on the part of the administration to obtain input and support of the broad international community, as reflected in the unanimous vote for the United Nations Security Council resolution.

And now we need a major administration effort to enlist Muslim countries and to enlist NATO to provide needed troops, police and security personnel.

We have recently seen major setbacks in the security situation in Iraq, including political assassinations of Iraqi government officials and car bombings and other attacks which have produced casualties among U.S. and coalition soldiers and killed scores and seriously injured hundreds of ordinary Iraqi civilians and security personnel. The U.S. effort in Iraq is truly a race against time, a race to establish a sufficient level of security that will allow the political process to go forward, with the convening of the national conference in July and the elections of a national assembly in December.

It is a race against time, because the United States appears to be losing the war for the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. According to press reports, a recent poll conducted by the Coalition Provisional Authority but not released to the public indicated that an overwhelming 92 percent of Iraqis view the coalition forces as occupiers, and only 2 percent as liberators. In fact, 55 percent of the Iraqi people said they would feel safer if U.S. troops left immediately.

At the same time, it is interesting to note, and discouraging to note, that 81 percent of the Iraqis polled said that they had an improved opinion of Muqtada al-Sadr, and 64 percent said the actions of his militia have made Iraq more unified.

While their opinion of Sadr is improving, their opinions of Americans are certainly not. Fifty-four percent of Iraqis believe that all Americans act like those who perpetrated the abuses at Abu Ghraib.

We have a problem.

There are still more questions than answers concerning Abu Ghraib and the larger issue concerning the methods of interrogation and the treatment of detainees in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay.

LEVIN: Every day, there are more revelations that appear to involve senior U.S. government officials in decisions that disregard tenets of the Geneva Conventions.

This has adverse effects on the future well-being of our troops and on our ability to establish security and stability in Iraq. It makes it more difficult to attract allies to help us wage a comprehensive political, economic and military campaign against the conditions and forces that breed terrorism throughout the world.

There are a large number of unresolved issues surrounding the ending of the occupation and the evolving relationship with a newly sovereign Iraqi government. Among those issues, concerning the operation of the multinational -- are many issues and questions concerning the operation of the multinational force and its relationship with Iraqi security forces.

The letters from Secretary Powell and Prime Minister Allawi annexed to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 agree that unity of command will be achieved through the coordination in the Iraqi Ministerial Committee for National Security and other coordinating bodies at national, regional and local levels. We need to understand from our witnesses today how these coordinating mechanisms will operate in practice.

The letter from Secretary Powell states that, quote, "Multinational force must continue to function under a framework that affords the force and its personnel the status that they need to accomplish their mission and in which the contributing states have responsibility for exercising jurisdiction over their personnel." He further states that, quote, "The existing framework governing these matters is sufficient for these purposes."

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Our witnesses today will hopefully describe specifically how U.S. soldiers and contractors will be assured legal protections as they perform their missions in Iraq. We need to reverse the view of Iraqis and the allied forces as occupiers. That means that the interim Iraqi government must have real decision-making power and must also be able to direct reconstruction resources to projects that have immediate effect on the daily lives of Iraqis.

The ordinary Iraqi must see the interim government as an entity that has a positive impact on his or her life and as an entity that merits support. Then Iraqis will see the insurgents as a threat to their own well-being rather than as a force against the occupier. Only an Iraqi government which commands popular support can defeat the ongoing insurgency.

With support comes intelligence that enables successful action against the insurgents. With successful action comes security and further legitimacy for the government. The challenge for the United States is to support that process in a way that enhances the Iraqi government's legitimacy and promotes that security.

Thank you.

WARNER: Thank you very much.

Gentlemen, we're under way.

WARNER: Secretary Wolfowitz?

WOLFOWITZ: Mr. Chairman, I've given you a fairly lengthy written statement which I'd be happy to put in the record...

WARNER: The statements of all witnesses will be placed in the record.

WOLFOWITZ: Just like to make a few hopefully brief comments basically about the trip that I just came back from. I went to Iraq with, among other people, our vice chief of staff for the Army, General George Casey.

And I want to say I appreciate the very speedy action that you and your committee took in considering that nomination to nominate General Casey to be the commander in multinational force Iraq. I think he's an outstanding officer, and a lot is going to ride on his shoulders, going forward. So I thank the committee for its speedy action.

The purpose of my trip was twofold; in part, as always, to visit our magnificent troops. And I did get to visit all five American divisions, as well as the British division, and talk to the Polish commander.

And one can't help but, over and over again, being impressed by the skill and the resourcefulness and the intelligence and, most of all, the courage of our men and women who are on the front lines. And I want to express my appreciation and admiration for them and what they've done.

I think also this is a good occasion, since the Coalition Provisional Authority will be out of business in just a few more days, to express appreciation for the sacrifice that so many civilians and military have contributed to that effort, also risking their lives and, unfortunately, in a number of cases, sacrificing their lives for an enormously important cause.

And I think I'd also particularly like to pay tribute to the courage of the journalists who cover this war, who, I think, 34 of them have given their lives.

This is a dangerous theater. It's dangerous just to be there. It's particularly dangerous to be up there on the front lines. But I think our troops' morale is fantastic. They believe and know that they are doing an important job, and they believe that they're succeeding.

The second purpose of this visit was to lead a multinational team, including General Casey, including the deputy chief of mission of our new embassy that will be stood up in Iraq, Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, my counterpart in the U.K. and a representative of the Polish

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government for extensive discussions with Prime Minister Allawi and his new national security team -- the defense minister, the interior minister and the national security advisor -- to discuss his plans for Iraq's security strategy, his plans for how to defeat this, what he calls correctly, this "evil enemy," and his plans for standing up Iraqi security forces that can win this fight.

Because, in the long run, the key to success here is not American troops; it's Iraqi police, it's Iraqi national guard, it's Iraqi army, it's Iraqis ready to stand up and fight for their own country.

WOLFOWITZ: In fact, by our own count, I might mention that more than 400 Iraqis have already died in the line of duty, alongside our forces, fighting that enemy.

Our impression overall was very positive.

Prime Minister Allawi is a forceful, thoughtful man who very clearly conveyed a sense of strength and determination. That, I think, is what he's conveying to the Iraqi people on a daily basis. He understands that the security problem is the biggest problem facing the Iraqi people, and he's determined, first and foremost, to be able to solve that.

That is the key, in turn, to moving forward to elections, which is the next important step in Iraq's political process.

A recurrent theme in our discussions was the importance of the Iraqi army as a symbol of national strength. The prime minister's made no secret of his disagreement with the earlier decision to disband the army, and I would not be surprised if, at least in some symbolic way, he reverses that.

More importantly, substantively, what he wants to do and what his plan envisions is bringing back significant numbers of officers from the old Iraqi army. It's a process that we had started, but I think it will very much accelerate under his plan.

The general tenor of our discussions was to explain to him and his national security team the efforts that are already under way on the American side, on the coalition side, an effort that's now been consolidated, as I think you know, under a three-star U.S. commander, Lieutenant General Dave Petraeus.

Our goal is to build Iraqi security capacity as rapidly as possible. We were, I will admit, going in, a bit concerned that perhaps the prime minister would have a totally different plan and try to change course 90 degrees or 180 degrees. As General Petraeus himself has said, this is a supertanker, not a speedboat; it can't turn on a dime.

I'm happy to report that the prime minister's plans, I think, mesh quite well with what's already under way, but take it in a somewhat direction, in line with his own ideas about the structure of the armed forces. And, ultimately, I think it will be more ambitious. In that regard, however, we emphasize that our plan already commits most of the resources under the U.S. supplemental appropriation that were dedicated to security forces. Some \$3.4 billion of the \$18.6 billion, as I think you know, were allocated to security.

WOLFOWITZ: After an initial slow start, a great deal of equipment is now arriving for all levels of Iraqi security forces under that appropriation.

Prime Minister Allawi understands very clearly the importance of prioritization, that you do first things first and second things second. And if there are things you'd like to do that you can't afford, you make sure they're lowest on your priority list.

We also agreed that if we need additional resources, there are, for one thing, the possibility of finding some within the Iraqi budget. It's worth pointing out that Iraq has already committed -- and this is, I think, a significant figure -- \$20 billion of its own resources. That's a pretty impressive number. \$20 billion of Iraqi resources that have already gone into funding the government and funding reconstruction, including 350,000 teachers, 100,000 doctors,

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more than 2,000 schools, almost 250 hospitals, over a billion dollars in improving electricity infrastructure. This is all from Iraqi funds.

And there's more coming in, additional billions, and of course from oil revenues. And of course that's one of the major targets of the enemy, is to try to reduce oil production.

But as substantial as those numbers sound, they have to go a very long way. So I think both of us believe that one of the first places to go for help in training and equipping Iraqi security forces is to the international community, including starting with NATO at the summit coming up in Istanbul.

Prime Minister Allawi has written to the NATO secretary-general soliciting NATO support in a number of areas, including military contributions to providing additional forces, particularly for U.N. security, but importantly for training and equipping Iraqi security forces.

In my statement, I outlined the priorities he assigns to the various Iraqi forces: the Iraqi intervention force, the Iraqi special operations force, the Iraqi National Guard which is based on what we started to develop as the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps.

The Iraqis explained to us that the Civil Defense Corps -- I don't know whether it's the Arabic translation or whether it's just the words themselves, but he said it sounds to people like the fire department. It's really more like a branch of the army.

WOLFOWITZ: But it's not just a change of name. It will be organized into a brigade and division structure, with 18 national guard brigades, which provides one for each province, and six divisions.

They'd also like to put a corps structure on top of that, but I think they were persuaded that that's something that can wait. We don't think the resource requirements for these headquarters will be enormous, because we're not talking about expeditionary headquarters of the type that we would deploy. But resources have got to be taken into account.

From the prime minister's point of view, it's an enormously important opportunity to bring back clean officers from the old army. I emphasize that problem that he will face of how to vet out the bad ones from that barrel, but he's determined to move ahead, and I think he has the skill and wisdom to do so.

As I indicated, and as Senator Levin alluded to in his statement, the Iraqis are eager to get additional international contributions, with the exception that they believe neighboring states should not do so because of the political issues that raises.

We and they are focused, in particular, on getting additional international contributions to support the United Nations activities in Iraq. We think that is one mission that more countries can and should be able to contribute to.

I'd like to close -- I started by commenting on the courage of the Americans who are participating in this effort. I think it's important to close with a comment about the courage of the Iraqis.

The prime minister, himself, is an incredibly brave man. He was attacked in 1979 in his apartment in London by one of Saddam's agents. He was alerted just in time to get his head out of the way of the ax, but he was nearly chopped in two. He spent a year in the hospital. His wife was permanently institutionalized from a nervous breakdown she suffered as a result.

We met with the president of Iraq, a remarkable man named Ghazi al-Yawer. I think some of you had the opportunity to meet him when he was in Washington a couple of weeks ago.

He is a leading figure in the Shamar tribe, which is one of the largest tribes in Iraq, a tribe, by the way, that is a mixture of Shia and Sunni, which is apparently a not unknown Iraqi phenomena.

His predecessor was assassinated with a car bomb just a month before -- just about two months ago, and Sheikh Ghazi became the



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president of the interim Governing Council because his predecessor was murdered.

We met with the deputy prime minister, a man named Barham Salih, who many of us, I think, have known for a long time. He was, back in 2002, the target of an assassination attempt by AL Qaida-associated killers who had apparent connections to Iraqi intelligence. We visited the Marines in Fallujah and met a young Marine private 1st class who had been wounded in action and whose life had been saved by the heroism of five Iraqi Civil Defense Corps members who put their own lives in danger to rescue that Marine.

And I could go on. But most movingly of all, we met this very dynamic, impressive young Iraqi Kurdish woman, who was our interpreter up in Mosul. Her sister was assassinated just a few weeks ago because she was working for the Americans. And my military assistant who knew her from when he was with the 101st Division up north asked her, "Why do you keep doing this," and she said, "Because my father told me you must never retreat in the face of evil."

These people are staring evil in the face. They know what their enemies want to do. They're standing up with enormous courage. They're counting on our support and our help, but they're prepared to face death in the face because they understand what the stakes are. This enemy has one, and one only, skill, and that is killing and destroying mostly innocent people. That's its strength, but I think it's also its weakness, because the overwhelming majority of Iraqis want peace and security and the opportunity to build a new Iraq that this enemy is trying to frustrate.

And that, Mr. Chairman, is why I'm convinced that they can step up to this job, they will step up to this job; that the plan that the president laid out a few weeks ago, moving first to a sovereign government on July 1st, is a plan that leads to Iraqi self-government and Iraqi self-defense, which is the key to victory in this which is an incredibly important fight.

I thank the committee for the support you continue to give our troops. I think they're enormously appreciative of the kind of help they get from back here. They deserve every bit of it, and I express my thanks and gratitude.

WARNER: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I'm pleased to advise you that General Casey, who appeared before this committee in that very seat yesterday, was confirmed by the Senate last night.

WOLFOVITZ: That's very nice news. Thank you.

WARNER: I also advise my colleagues that the bipartisan leadership agreed to let this committee go to conference immediately. Secretary Armitage?

ARMITAGE: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Levin, thank you for the opportunity this morning. At one point in my professional life, I spent a good deal of time before this committee. So it's nice to be home. But having had that experience in the past, I realize that your patience is in inverse proportion to the length of my opening statement.

(LAUGHTER)

So I'm here to try to answer questions that you have. That's my job. And I'll look forward to the opportunity.

WARNER: Thank you for that very well-informed opening statement.

(LAUGHTER)

All right, General, pick up the ball.

MYERS: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to be kind of in the middle between these two gentlemen.

But thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin and members of the committee, for your continuing support of our men and women in uniform, particularly at this critical time, including your efforts leading to the passage of the 2005 Defense Authorization Bill. We thank you very much.

In my view, this is an historic moment. Iraq becomes a fully sovereign nation next week, an important milestone on a clear path



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toward democracy and freedom.

MYERS: We're very encouraged by Prime Minister Allawi's words and his actions. As Secretary Wolfowitz said, he is committed to an effective partnership between Iraq security forces and the multinational forces, and has forcefully and publicly expressed his gratitude to the coalition for their sacrifices to help liberate the people of Iraq.

Mr. Allawi wants the coalition to stay and help. The Iraqi government wants the coalition to stay and help. And they understand that we're going to be partners in the effort to promote security in Iraq and allow for a freely elected government.

The new interim government has been very aggressive in establishing the organizations and the processes required to make that partnership work effectively. Under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1511 and 1546, the coalition has the authority and the protection we need to stay and carry out this important phase of our mission.

This clearly is a pivotal moment for Iraq, and I believe the violent extremists who want Iraq to fail understand that very, very well. I'm sure you all remember the Zarqawi letter that we picked up in January. In it, he said that the insurgents were frustrated, that they were failing this race against time, and that they'd have to resort to even more brutal and destructive measures to stop the march of freedom.

The violence of the last few months shows that the insurgents are afraid their time is running out. They know that they have a lot to lose.

I expect the increased violence against the coalition, against Iraqi citizens will continue past the 30 June transfer of sovereignty. Despite these challenges, I believe that we are on the right path, helping Iraqis become fully capable of providing for their own security.

With the help of the coalition, Iraqi security forces are becoming better-equipped, better-trained and better-led. And next week, they'll have absolutely no doubt they're fighting for their own country. That's an enormous step forward.

Our vision for Iraq's future remains fixed. The dedication and professionalism of our service men and women remains fixed. The resolve of the American people and that of our allies must also remain fixed. That resolve is key to our success and key to the morale of our fighting men and women.

Your steadfast support has been and is also very, very crucial.

So I thank you again for your continued support.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: Thank you very much, General.

Our colleagues will now proceed to the first round of six minutes each.

And may I most respectfully ask the colleagues the following. I went back to look at some of the records of our previous hearings, and in certain instances where questions are asked by senators, the witnesses simply have not been given the opportunity to fully respond to the question. As such, the record becomes of less value to those who look to these proceedings for answers.

WARNER: So I urge all senators, in propounding their questions, to respect the right of the witness to have a reasonable amount of time in which to answer the question.

I'll start off with you, Secretary Wolfowitz. I thought your opening statement and your trip indicated what I perceived as a ray of optimism.

All of us are agreed on one thing, and that is, as soon and the sooner the Iraqi government-to-be and the Iraqi people swing behind their own cause to seek freedom, it's for the better.

Now, we focus so much on the violence in the streets, as occasioned by weapons and fighting. But there's another violence out

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there, and that's the violence coming largely from beyond the borders of Iraq in the form of the media distorting the actual gains that have been made, distorting, I think, the views of the people who seek to have freedom.

What are we doing, particularly as this new government takes over, to help the government maintain a freedom of the press but, at the same time, get their story out, such that their new leadership can be better understood by the people and by the world, and the gains that are being made by the courage of many -- not just the soldiers and the coalition forces, but some of the Iraqi people, most of the Iraqi people -- can be recognized?

The sooner that comes to play, I think the sooner we can expect to see a downturn in this violence.

WOLFOVITZ: It's a critically important question, and I think everyone recognizes that this battle is in no small measure an information battle, and the enemy is actually very skilled at shaping the story, getting its story out. And lies run faster than the truth, and that is part of the challenge here.

But the very fact of an Iraqi government assuming sovereignty is a huge step forward in this battle, because we will no longer be burdened with a considerably weighty label of being an occupying power. That, I think, has hurt us badly. I think it is one of the factors contributing to some of those statistics that Senator Levin quoted at the beginning.

WOLFOVITZ: Iraqis wanted to be liberated; they did not want to be occupied. And that label hurts us.

We'll also be helped by the fact that Iraqis will be up in the -- you can already see it. The fact that the prime minister is a spokesman is a huge step forward. The fact that the prime minister is a man who goes and visits sites where the enemy has sabotaged oil or goes...

WARNER: I agree on that. But what are we doing to implement the delivery of that message in a free and open way to those people? Time and time again in our hearings, we've emphasized the need to help facilitate the distribution of the accurate facts, not just the distortions that come from abroad.

WOLFOVITZ: Senator, we're working on it. We are providing resources to them. We enable them to stand up this TV network, al Iraqiya, which seems to have a pretty good viewership.

I think, again, it's going to be improvement the more the Iraqis shape the content of it, because they know much better what kind of message to get out.

We have al Hurra, and I think Secretary Armitage can talk about that.

And one last thing, before I turn it over to him. I think it was Robert Kaplan had a column in the Wall Street Journal recently -- I'd be happy to put it in the record -- where he comments on the fact that we're fighting an information-age war with industrial-age information procedures.

And I am struck, and I think this committee has seen it on any number of issues that you look into, we have a system that moves information very slowly up to the top, sometimes for good reasons of protecting the rights of people who might be accused, sometimes just because we're very careful. But the enemy isn't.

WARNER: Let me proceed.

Basically, the same questions you, Mr. Secretary. You must recognize that the importance, really the force multiplier of getting a good, positive message out and inspiring the Iraqi people into a greater measure of courage.

Also I'd like to know exactly, as Ambassador Bremer, who's done, I think, a tough job as well as anyone can do it, steps down, what will be the differences between the evolution of Bremer going down and retiring and Negroponte stepping up as the new ambassador? How will it be different? And how have you designed this new charter and

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embassy to meet this increasing challenge of the insurgency in the streets?

ARMITAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As Paul indicated, the first thing and, I think, the most important thing we're going to do is be less visible. And that's already started.

And that less visibility, I hate to quote polls, but the dreadful polls that Senator Levin correctly quoted, I think, are offset today by the polls that show that 68 to 73 percent of the Iraqi people have a favorable opinion of this interim government. So the word is starting to get out. And I think it's more credible in Iraq because it's word that's coming out of Iraqi mouths.

When John Negroponte arrives 1 July in Baghdad, he's not going to be Jerry Bremer II. He's going to be an ambassador. He'll be the first American ambassador to a free Iraq. He'll join 49 other embassies who have ambassadors.

Now, he'll be an ambassador with a lot of money in his pocket, thanks to the U.S. Congress and the generosity of the people of America. He will have a very good and close relationship with George Casey. So he'll be an ambassador that has a lot of sway (ph), but he will be an ambassador. And it's an important concept. And that's the first point we're trying to get out to the Iraqi people: CPA is over; we're in.

In our manning for the new embassy, sir, we've budgeted for 34 people to be involved in press, as press training, press advising.

ARMITAGE: Obviously, USAID will have a rather major role in continuing press training. There will be upgrades necessary for some of the broadcast systems of Iraq. We've got our own, as Paul indicated, with al Hurra. And AL Arabiya is doing fairly well these days -- Iraqiya -- doing fairly well.

So I think that part of that corner has been turned. But it's been turned more because Iraqis are talking and we're not.

WARNER: All right.

MYERS: Chairman, on the security part, what we're doing specifically is, we're going to replace Mark Kimmitt, who has been the spokesman, along with Dan Senor, on the security side, and generally on CPA issues. But on the security side, we're going to replace General Kimmitt with another general.

But his role is not to be out in front of the press. As Secretary Armitage said, we want Iraqis speaking. So his role will be more in mentorship and in making sure that the message gets out to U.S. troops; it needs to get out to it internally and back here to the States, but not in a very public way.

So we're going to keep the same apparatus, but we're going to put a different face on that apparatus.

WARNER: Thank you.

You mentioned in your opening statement that, in your professional judgment, there are in place now, while it's not the traditional status of forces agreement that we had hoped for to protect our troops from any prosecution for their action, you feel that the current structure and framework is adequate to fully protect our forces.

MYERS: Mr. Chairman, I do, through multiplicity of means, if you will.

First of all, the U.N. Security Council resolution that recently passed is one of those guarantees. The CPA Order 17, which is being staffed finally and will be in effect, will have effect throughout this interim government, is also one of those means.

And so, we feel that our forces are protected.

WARNER: That's reassuring.

Secondly, General Casey was here yesterday, and I think quite appropriately in response to an important question, he said, any planner would be looking at the ability to augment our force level if the on-scene commanders were to send back the message, we need more

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forces.

I think his message was very clear, but it has nevertheless reverberated out there and been sort of viewed by some as the first call for additional force structure.

Can you address what Casey stated, the accuracy of it, and your own posture with regard to the adequacy of the current force level in the face of increasing and perhaps better-coordinated violence and what the future portends?

MYERS: My understanding of General Casey's comment is that he was describing a prudent planning process...

WARNER: Correct.

MYERS: ... that any of us would go through...

WARNER: That's right.

MYERS: ... to make sure if the field commander is engaged in a serious effort, wanted more forces to prosecute that effort. And that goes on, I must say, that goes on continuously. We have to look around corners. If we don't look around corners, then we can't respond to the needs of our combatant commanders.

So that's what I believe General Casey...

WARNER: And that is accurate. And that is prudent. And as you and I know from our experiences, that should and always is being done in operations of this nature.

WARNER: But it's now being translated as the first indication of, perhaps, a call for additional forces.

MYERS: In my latest conversations with General Abizaid -- I haven't talked to General Casey about this. But in my latest conversations with General Abizaid, there is no indication that he needs more forces for the kind of conflict we're seeing right now. Let me try to describe this. This is not traditional warfare, where you can count numbers as capability. There's a conventional element of this. We saw that yesterday, as a matter of fact, where there were some conventional-like attacks, but small.

Predominantly what is the most effective attack for the terrorists are terror-type attacks, where individuals attack the infrastructure, where individuals that want to commit suicide take a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device next to police stations or governors' offices or the marketplace and then blow them up.

More forces aren't necessarily going to help in that case. And I think that's what we see here, is this thought that we're in some sort of conventional war, when we're in probably the epitome of what would be asymmetric warfare.

So the 141,000 forces that the U.S. has in there, the 22,000 coalition forces, to this point, General Abizaid and his commanders think is adequate for the task.

The other part of that, of course, is we have a large Iraqi force structure that continues to get better, in terms of their training and equipping and their leadership.

WARNER: Thank you.

WOLFOVITZ: Mr. Chairman, let me also emphasize what General Myers said about the flexibility of respond, because we know the enemy is really targeting, the coming weeks and months, they're targeting the new government as it stands up.

Zarqawi has openly, in a kind of typically overheated rhetoric, threatened Allawi personally. We know they'd like nothing more than to shape the minds of Iraqis and Americans that this new government is a failure. And we know they are going to try to do everything they can to destabilize the country leading to elections at the end of this year.

So this is not something you can plan precisely against, because you're dealing with a thinking, very active, evil enemy.

WOLFOVITZ: And therefore we do need the flexibility that General Casey and General Myers alluded to, to be able to apply more forces if we need more forces.

WARNER: Thank you very much.

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Senator Levin?

LEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Myers, General Casey testified that the Coalition Provisional Authority order, which provides immunity from the Iraqi legal process for our troops, must be amended to extend beyond June 30th.

Two questions: One, do you agree? And, number two, would any amendment or any order of the CPA be binding on the new sovereign government?

MYERS: Senator Levin, my understanding is that the order is being restaffed, and that will be finished either today or tomorrow.

ARMITAGE: It's finished today. It's gone out to Baghdad, sir. They'll want to, obviously, make sure that the new government sees it and is not in opposition to it. There have been discussions continually about it. But they will not sign off on it. That is not their role.

LEVIN: Will the new sovereign government have the power to rescind that order?

ARMITAGE: The new sovereign government, in effect, would. If they're sovereign, they could ask us to leave and we'd have to leave. But the combination of the CPA Order 17, as amended, and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 is felt by all to give us sufficient protections.

LEVIN: And my question, though, is would this new sovereign government have the power to rescind that order?

MYERS: My understanding is that...

WARNER: Let's get Secretary Armitage's quick answer on that.

MYERS: OK.

ARMITAGE: I want to think about it. I want to get the right answer rather than a quick answer.

WARNER: Well, since we have six minutes, give us your thoughts perhaps later after you've had a chance to think about it.

In terms of the...

MYERS: My understanding of this issue is that the CPA orders cannot be repealed or modified until Iraq's permanent government is in place to enact legislation. So they stay effective through that period.

LEVIN: So during the six-month period, or whatever the period is before the elections are held and there's an elected government, what you're saying is that we have a legal opinion that the interim government cannot rescind that order. Is that true?

MYERS: Yes, sir. That's my understanding.

LEVIN: Thank you. Would you provide that opinion for the record?

MYERS: Yes, sir.

LEVIN: Thank you.

Have we specifically asked, Secretary Armitage, Muslim nations to provide troops, police...

ARMITAGE: Police?

LEVIN: Troops or police.

ARMITAGE: We have had discussions with Bangladesh and Pakistan about this, as has the interim government of Iraq with, at least, Pakistan.

We have not -- we've begun discussions with 13 other nations, some of whom are Muslim, about providing security for the U.N. facilities, which was discussed in 1546.

And Prime Minister Allawi said to your colleagues the other day, when Senator Daschle's delegation visited him, that he'd be working with the neighbors. He thinks it may be about time to try to introduce them.

LEVIN: Thank you.

Secretary Wolfowitz, or anybody, what is the status of the indictment against Sadr? And also, have the officials of the interim government invited Sadr to participate in the national congress? Does

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that indictment still stand?

WOLFOWITZ: It definitely still stands.

I don't know about your second question.

ARMITAGE: I don't either. But Prime Minister Allawi, I think, in the conversation with Mr. Daschle, said that Sadr had to face jurisprudence.

LEVIN: And had not been invited to participate in the...

ARMITAGE: I didn't know the answer to the second part. I was responding to the first part.

LEVIN: OK. Apparently, Prime Minister Allawi has indicated that the government is considering the imposition of a state of emergency that could include a curfew and a ban on public demonstrations. But just talking about the curfew, since we, presumably, would have to enforce it, have we talked to him about that, and do we support the imposition of a curfew?

WOLFOWITZ: Actually, we have the power to impose curfews, as we see the necessity in particular places.

This is an example of, I think, exactly the kind of thing that this consultative mechanism is designed to work out a common policy on. We've been doing this for 2 1/2 years, really, in Afghanistan with Karzai. He sometimes wants to do things that we think are imprudent, and we tell him frequently, "If you do it, you better have the capability to do it yourself, because we're not obligated to enforce things that we don't think are appropriate."

I think...

LEVIN: Is that true with Allawi, too?

WOLFOWITZ: I think it's even -- let me put it this way: I think we have better developed mechanisms already with Allawi than we have after two years in Afghanistan.

I think it will work well. We have common purposes. He's not talking about blanket national martial law procedures with extreme measures. He's basically talking about giving Iraqi police and Iraqi forces the authorities that we already have under 1546.

LEVIN: Did we discuss that issue specifically with Allawi, as to what -- before his statement was made about imposing a curfew? Do you know?

WOLFOWITZ: It didn't come up in our talks.

LEVIN: Secretary Wolfowitz, you have cited both here and, I believe, recently at the House Armed Services Committee, as evidence of cooperation between Iraq and AL Qaida, evidence in a sealed indictment of Osama bin Laden in 1998.

Why do you continue to cite that as evidence of a relationship?

WOLFOWITZ: It's one of many pieces of evidence that suggests that there was contact of some significance between these two organizations.

LEVIN: Are you aware of the fact that that indictment has been modified to exclude that statement?

WOLFOWITZ: And I'm also aware that the cooperating witness who provided the basis for that indictment was reinterviewed as recently as a year ago and reaffirmed the story.

WOLFOWITZ: And he's a man that's described even by Richard Clarke as one of the keys to our understanding of AL Qaida.

LEVIN: My question, though, are you aware of the fact the indictment has been modified to exclude that reference?

WOLFOWITZ: The subsequent open indictment of bin Laden did not include that. That's right after the 1998 embassy bombings.

LEVIN: My question is, why do you continue, then, to cite an indictment which has been modified to exclude the reference that you continue to make?

WOLFOWITZ: Because I believe that was a statement made by an important source on AL Qaida that was considered sufficiently credible and valid to be included in a very serious federal proceeding.

LEVIN: My time's up. Thank you.

WARNER: Senator McCain?

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MCCAIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses for being here today.

And I do think we have some good news in this poll that the Iraqi people are now strongly supporting their new leadership. And I think this provides us with an opportunity, a window of opportunity.

And I wonder if the witnesses agree that the next few months are absolutely critical in this whole scenario. Would you agree, Secretary Armitage?

ARMITAGE: Of course, Senator.

MCCAIN: Secretary Armitage, we are also in a situation, including the events yesterday, of a degree of sophistication and level of, if you want to call it terrorist attacks which are remarkable both in their efficiency and in their number of casualties. Would you agree?

ARMITAGE: Yes, I do.

MCCAIN: So we're not where we had envisioned we would be after our significant military victory, right?

ARMITAGE: That's correct, Senator.

MCCAIN: What went wrong?

ARMITAGE: We've spoken to this. One, I think we underestimated the enemy, and we didn't destroy him in our initial attack, and he melted away, and we're seeing him again. That's number one. I think, number two, we didn't reckon correctly with the extent to which Iraq had become a criminal society in any attempts to evade sanctions and everything else that had happened, particularly in the last 12 years.

And number three, I think we underestimated the degree to which this enemy had a central nervous system. And I think the attacks the other day show that it does have a central nervous system.

MCCAIN: Do you agree that we didn't have sufficient troops?

ARMITAGE: No, I don't, Senator.

MCCAIN: You don't agree? And I wonder why not?

ARMITAGE: In a department, we defer to military judgment on what's sufficient troops. Any views of this we had during the run-up to the war were expressed fully, and we felt we got our full say.

MCCAIN: Which was?

ARMITAGE: Which was we wanted to make sure we had sufficient force and sufficient points of entry to defeat this enemy, and we were convinced that we did.

MCCAIN: We had sufficient number of troops, Secretary Wolfowitz?

WOLFOWITZ: I think, with respect to the issue that Secretary Armitage corrected identified, which is this enemy didn't surrender on April 9th, Saddam continued to fight until he was captured, Zarqawi continues to fight to this day, the killers that supported his regime for 35 years continue to fight, there was no surrender, there hasn't been yet...

MCCAIN: So we didn't...

(CROSSTALK)

MCCAIN: It's interesting, I asked it about the troops question to you...

WOLFOWITZ: I'm trying to answer.

MCCAIN: It's interesting, things didn't turn out as we had anticipated they would, yet we didn't do anything wrong. That's very interesting.

WOLFOWITZ: Senator, I...

MCCAIN: Go ahead.

WOLFOWITZ: I don't believe that -- let me say three points. Number one, I don't believe, and our commanders don't believe, that more troops would have enabled us to find these people where they were hiding. The problem has been finding them. They are very good at hiding. That's been the problem.

Number two, there has been a concern -- and part of our problem is this appearance of an occupation force -- that a much bigger force would have increased that appearance.



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MCCAIN: So which brings us...

WOLFOWITZ: And third, if I can agree with you for a moment, I think that it probably is the case that if we had had more American troops down in the Najaf-Karbala area over the last period of time we're talking about, six or eight months, Mr. Sadr might not have gotten out of control the way he did. So that is one place where it might have made a difference.

MCCAIN: Which brings us to Fallujah. We agreed that somehow that we -- after announcing that we would go in and attack and capture those individuals who killed and dismembered the bodies of four American citizens, we then made an agreement with the militias there that they would control Fallujah, they would turn over the perpetrators of that crime, other terrorists and significant weapons. Has any of that happened?

WOLFOWITZ: Virtually none of that has happened. What we have achieved is a certain degree of calm in Fallujah, which may help in the rest of the country.

There is some indication that there are beginning to be some splits within Fallujah, particularly between Iraqis and foreigners, and some degree of Iraqis turning on the foreigners. And there is a considerable concern that Fallujah might -- this is on the negative side -- be a place where the enemy is hiding.

And we talked about this with the prime minister. I think we're all agreed that the current status quo in Fallujah isn't acceptable, and Fallujah's not a model for the rest of the country. So we need to move forward on that.

WOLFOWITZ: I don't know, General Myers, if you want to...

MYERS: I absolutely agree with that. We have not met any of the conditions that we initially set and that you outlined, Senator McCain.

And we've had, in the last several days, to go after foreign fighters in Fallujah with 500-pound bombs; we think, in both cases, successfully.

MCCAIN: But if I could just interrupt there, but the reason for not going into Fallujah was to prevent civilian casualties, so now we're dropping 500-pound bombs.

MYERS: But these were very precise, and the collateral damage was essentially zero, upon site exploitation. So, we're very careful how we do that.

If I can go back to your original question...

MCCAIN: Sure.

MYERS: ... that Secretary Armitage answered, part of the thinking that went into the plan for the original combat in Iraq was that we made the decision -- and you could have gone several different ways -- but we made the decision that we wanted this to be as humane a combat operation as war can be. That was a decision we made.

And so, certain factors are emphasized over others if you're going to do that. And one of them was speed and precision and to let regular Iraqi divisions, while destroying equipment and some of their people, if they melted away, well, then let them melt away, because they were conscripts, after all.

So if there's a blame here, it was making some assumptions on how the Iraqi people would react to that. And, I would submit, we were probably too gracious in our victory, in hindsight.

But that was the -- the philosophy going in was that we were going to liberate Iraq, not conquer Iraq.

And, clearly, things started to change, as those former regime elements -- and I still maintain a very small segment of the population, plus the foreign fighters, can have a disproportionate impact because of the methods they use, where they don't care about the loss of innocent lives.

So that's where we have evolved to.

MCCAIN: Well, I may have to leave some of this to the historians. But it's interesting that very little mistakes were made,

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and yet we find over 100 people killed and wounded in coordinated attacks all over Iraq.

MCCAIN: And clearly some of this is being orchestrated out of Fallujah. As Secretary Armitage said, this is a central nervous system. But we didn't make any mistakes.

My time has expired.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

Senator Kennedy?

KENNEDY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Secretary Wolfowitz, I appreciate your comments about the courage of the Iraqi leaders. I'm one of those who had the chance to meet President Yawer when he was over here, and he's an impressive figure. And I think when we see the determination of those individuals to try and lead the country, it does impress all of us. Let me just go back and review sort of the bidding about where we are and then I'll ask a couple of specific questions.

We're now -- really, I'm following up with Senator McCain. We've had 844 Americans who paid the ultimate price; 5,270 soldiers have been wounded. We have lost 25 in my own state of Massachusetts. The war costing us about \$4.7 billion every month.

We have the kind of pressures that are put on in a particular unit, MPs group, from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. They were mobilized December 5, 2002; sent to Iraq in April 2003 for six months. They were extended once, extended again -- thought they were going for six months, going 18 months. Eventually, they hope to come back in August, demobilize in October.

The uncertainty of how long these troops, American troops, are going to be over there, given not only the American troops themselves, the regular Army, but the Reserve and the Guard, is a matter of great concern.

And given the fact that we've had the U.N. resolutions, we have the new sovereignty coming up at the end of June, we have elections for the interim government that's going to establish the constitution, ratification nationwide and the constitution elections following that, American families want to know what the impact of all this is going to be on their service men and women, about their children.

I remember when you were here at the time of your hearing before our committee on confirmation, this is your quote.

KENNEDY: When you were asked about whether the guidelines should apply to future military action, you said, "I think it has to be something where we have a strategy for success, that we have a way of achieving our goals and completing the mission, and not ending up in something that is an unending commitment with no way out."

You were asked this week, the Armed Services Committee, about what's going to be the indication at the end. You say, "There is an end. The end is when the Iraqis are governing their own country."

Well, when are we going to know success? Are we going to know success when there are elections? Are we going to know that there's success when we have reconstruction? How much security is going to be success?

How are the American people going to know when there's success?

Are we going to just wait until the president says, "We've got success now, and we're going to start rotating out"?

How do we know that? How do we know we're not just ending up with an unending commitment with no way out?

WOLFOVITZ: I don't think it is an unending commitment with no way out, but I don't think you can predict these things, any more than you could predict the timetable for success in Germany at the end of World War II or the timetable for success in Korea after the end of that war.

Of course, the biggest problem here is that the war hasn't ended, the enemy hasn't given up.

Part of success is going to be when that enemy is either defeated or some of them may just decide actually in a formal or semi-formal

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way to come in and join the new Iraq.

But I think there's a clear path to success, because there are so many Iraqis who do want to stand up for their country. By the tens of thousands, they're prepared to risk their lives to defend their country.

KENNEDY: I want to give you...

WOLFOWITZ: I think the most important milestone here is going to be, particularly with respect to those families of service men and women, when the Iraqis are in the front line and the Iraqis, if casualties still have to be taken, are taking the bulk of the casualties. That'll be a huge milestone.

KENNEDY: Well, this is what we want to know, because we got 90 percent of the troops and 95 percent of the killed and wounded, what are the benchmarks? You're back there -- you have children that are over there. What are the benchmarks?

KENNEDY: What should the American people want to benchmark this? How do they know that the plan is successful? How do they know it's not deteriorating?

We've got to have some benchmarks that are out there rather than the general kind of comments. They want some benchmarks to know. They knew in World War II. They knew that after D-Day. Sure, they had the Battle of the Bulge but they were moving ahead on it. They knew certainly in the battle against Japan. They understood that. Korea, more complicated, and Vietnam. But people had an understanding of what the benchmarks were. They knew with the Second World War with the progress in North Africa. What happened in Western Europe?

The American people want to know, Mr. Secretary, what are the benchmarks? What are the things that they can watch on television, read in the newspaper, and say, "Look, that's real progress, that means my son or daughter is going to come on home"?

WOLFOWITZ: I think the kind of benchmark I mentioned in the beginning, of Iraqis who were courageous enough, like these five civil defense corps soldiers, to rescue an American who was wounded. I think, more and more, they're going to see capable Iraqi security forces taking on more and more demanding missions. But, you know, let's also keep some historical perspective. The Marshall Plan, as we all know, was initiated in 1948, a full three years after the end of World War II. And it was kind of a Hail Mary pass to rescue Europe from what looked like a totally failing, collapsing situation.

I mean, you can ask for benchmarks. We're working on benchmarks. The president laid out five clear benchmarks a couple of weeks ago, namely one that we're about to achieve, which is the standing up of the sovereign government; the second, standing up of the Iraqi security forces; the third, progress on reconstruction; the fourth, introduction of international forces through the U.N. resolution; and finally, elections at the end of this year, the beginning of next year.

Those are pretty important benchmarks. If we can achieve all of them in the next six months, we'll be doing very well.

KENNEDY: My time is up.

Some would think that we've already got a Marshall Plan over in Iraq right now, with the amount of economic aid and reconstruction that we have provided.

WOLFOWITZ: And a great deal is happening, Senator.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator Kennedy.  
Senator Roberts?

ROBERTS: Gentlemen, thank you for being here this morning.

Thank you for your perseverance and your service.

I'm going to be repetitive today. I think the most crucial ingredient with regard to our effort in Iraq is our resolve, theirs and more especially ours. Over the past several months, that resolve has been tested, and I think we've only seen an increase in the number

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and severity of such challenges, more especially with the full offensive that we see today.

ROBERTS: Now, we have the deadline for sovereignty now only five days away. I think it's absolutely critical that the administration and especially those of us in the Congress make it clear to the American people exactly what the transfer means with regard to our continued presence.

And I know you all mentioned, and I think members of this committee are extremely concerned about the information and the battle for the proper kind of information in that part of the world, in that part of the region and, more especially, in Iraq. I'm concerned about it in this country.

This really dates me, but in the 1940s, there was a song that my dad and mom enjoyed. It was called "Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative, and Don't Mess with Mr. In-Between." It seems to me that we have too many in this country who are accentuating the negative and eliminating the positive and making sure the U.S. is not in between. And I don't think that's possible at this particular time.

And so with the challenges to our resolve, no doubt some will point to the transfer of sovereignty, as Senator Kennedy has just indicated, as a justification for an exit from Iraq.

And what I want you to do -- what would be the specific implications of such an exit? Explain to the country exactly the downside of an early exit and what could happen, in regards to our national security and then also in regard to the region.

WOLFOWITZ: I think a precipitous exit like that would be an enormous victory for terrorism and for terrorists, and it would turn Iraq into a base and a sanctuary from which they could proceed to attack Saudi Arabia, which is already under attack and attack in Europe and in the United States.

They understand that this is the fight. They're putting everything they can into trying to defeat us.

ROBERTS: So this is a global effort.

WOLFOWITZ: It is absolutely connected to a global effort, yes, sir.

KENNEDY: Would the senator just yield since he mentioned my name?

ROBERTS: Yes, I'd be happy to yield.

KENNEDY: I did not suggest a cut-and-run policy. I asked about benchmarks. And I don't want to be associated with the remarks about what would happen if we just pulled out our troops. That was clearly not my statement. That would be a distortion and misrepresentation of my position.

I know the senator didn't mean that, but I want the record to reflect this.

ROBERTS: I thank the senator for his contribution. It saved me 30 seconds.

Who are these guys? Let's use the Butch Cassidy, Sundance Kid question. And, Secretary Armitage, you said the central nervous system.

ROBERTS: I just heard on the news this morning that Muqtada al-Sadr and his army are laying down the arms against the coalition forces and saying, "We're going to rise up against the Sunni extremists."

We've got those still loyal oil to the former regime, we have the foreign fighters, we have the extremists.

What level of coordination among these diverging groups are you seeing? Who are these guys now?

ARMITAGE: Look, I don't think anyone in this administration yet can tell you with a great deal of accuracy who they are and how many they are.

ROBERTS: Well, I have some concerns about that, because the chairman of the Intelligence Committee...

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ARMITAGE: Well, I'm raising it with you, sir...

ROBERTS: Yes, OK, I'm sorry, I'm not giving you an opportunity.

ARMITAGE: I'm raising it with you because you sit on another committee, and you understand what I'm saying.

I said one of our mistakes was that we didn't understand there was a central nervous system. Well, clearly, there is.

And how many are former regime elements, and how many are Zargawi and his evil-doers? I can't say. I don't think any of my colleagues can say. We don't know.

And how many are disaffected youth who, either to make a little money or just for the pure excitement of it, get in on the game? I can't tell you.

ROBERTS: Well, I hope we can. We have a thousand people now stood up in the Iraqi intelligence operation, 5,000 people with a new Iraqi intervention force.

If we do not have the proper intelligence -- and, yes, I am the chairman of the Intelligence Committee -- it worries me that we will not have the ability to really predict and protect not only our troops, but be successful.

We found Saddam by finally getting down to the clans and the families. And my hope is that, when we go through the vetting and we go through the training and we go through the equipment, in regards to the Iraqis, they will still have that kind of capability.

Do we see any real progress in that area?

ARMITAGE: Yes, my view, Senator -- and Paul would probably want to make a comment -- is that we're making a bet here, and the bet is that the Iraqis are going to fight more enthusiastically for Iraq than they fight for occupiers. And that's a bet we're all buying into.

And I buy it. I think they are, because they do know how to fight.

And we are seeing some changes, and others can talk about it, in regards to Iraqis helping us, giving us information, things of that nature. And hence, you have a precision strike on Fallujah, on a particular place in Fallujah.

So I think things in that regard are going to turn out a little better than we might suspect.

ROBERTS: I hope that's the case.

ARMITAGE: However, I think...

ROBERTS: There are certainly countries -- I have one more question and very limited time.

There are certain countries in the region that would like to see our efforts in Iraq fail, namely Iran. You know these folks.

ROBERTS: As we transfer the sovereignty to the Iraqis, what are the most significant concerns you have in this regard? What would happen in the region if, in fact, we were not successful?

And I've asked that of the secretary, but in your travels, more especially in regards to those who would like to see us fail, what are you most significant concerns?

ARMITAGE: Biggest concern is that Iranian money will go and buy mullahs in the south of Iraq and use that money to be able to thwart us.

The best news in this regard is that the leading Shia cleric in Iraq, al-Sistani, does not seem to have any affection for Iranian-style theocracy.

ROBERTS: My time is up, Mr. Chairman.

And I thank the panel. And persevere, gentlemen.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator Roberts.

Did each of the witnesses feel they had adequate time to...

ARMITAGE: I'm sure the question will come around again.

WARNER: Senator Lieberman?

LIEBERMAN: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to the witnesses. Thanks for what you've done over the last couple of years to bring us to where we are today. It's been a long, tough slog, to use a familiar word.

But I do think today, June 25th, five days from the transfer of

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authority, there is a lot for America and the American people to be proud of and a lot for the Iraqis and the Iraqi people to be proud of and optimistic about.

I mean, the fact is, we have lost American lives, we spent a lot of our own treasure, and it is important to remember that it's not for conquest, it's not for imperial, colonial plunder, it is for security and for a principle that has driven American history from the beginning, which is freedom and democracy.

And the fact is that Saddam Hussein, a brutal dictator who possessed weapons of mass destruction, used them, who supported terrorism, who responded to wrongdoing by his people -- and I've seen this with my own eyes in the films that many of us have seen -- cut off their head, their tongue, their hands -- is gone and in jail. And in place is an interim Iraqi government, not yet elected, but broad enough to, by the latest public opinion polling in Iraq, enjoy the support of two-thirds of the Iraqi people in a very difficult security context.

So we've come some way.

LIEBERMAN: And they're going to take over on June 30th. And then it's going to be a different kind of battle. Because after Saddam was gone, this did become a different kind of battle. It became, in my opinion, the major battleground in the war against terrorism, because the foreign fighters swarmed in there, they joined with the Saddam loyalists.

And now you've got these jihadists or some Iraqis against America. You've got jihadists and Saddam loyalists against an Iraqi government, as you said, Secretary Armitage.

And that's the choice for the Iraqi people. Do they want to go forward with self-government and a better life for themselves? OR do they want to yield to these forces? And do we, who will bring back if you can imagine it, a government that's going to be part Saddam Hussein and part Taliban -- because that's what the enemy fighters are all about here.

So I think we've done something difficult. Look, I can be critical of things that were not done. I have been critical of things that were not done or could have been done a lot better. But I think we're in a tough situation. We've made some extraordinary progress. And those who have given their lives have given them for a noble cause, a cause that's as critical to American security as most any I can think of that we've fought over the centuries.

I want to ask about the central nervous system that you referred to. Is it your opinion, Secretary Armitage, that there is a coordination, to the best of our knowledge, between the Saddam loyalists, the people that fell back and the foreign fighters?

ARMITAGE: I'm not sure I'm totally confident. We've seen some intelligence that indicates that they do hook up.

I think there is a central nervous system to the Zarqawi network. I found rather remarkable yesterday the timing, et cetera, of the car bombs in several different locations, which indicates to me a certain degree of command and control.

Now, I don't think it's the command and control we traditionally think about in our own military, but someone's giving general orders and other people are following them. I think that's fairly clear. And I think, as my colleagues have stated up here, that as we move forward until 30 June, I think these fellows who attacked yesterday are going to reload and try again. And as we move toward the elections in December and January, they're really going to exercise themselves.

LIEBERMAN: I agree. So the point I draw from this is that clearly there was a lot of controversy, as one of the exchanges between Secretary Wolfowitz and I believe it was Senator Levin indicate about the extent of cooperation between Saddam Hussein regime and AL Qaida earlier.

LIEBERMAN: It seems to me that the foreign fighters, including

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Zargawi, who's allied with AL Qaida, and the Saddam remnants is growing increasingly clear.

I want to go to another topic, because those poll numbers about the interim Iraqi government are very encouraging. And the most important thing we can do to solidly them, it seems to me, is not only maintaining the security; in some ways, just as important is the civilian reconstruction, making sure that the Iraqis get jobs, that the electricity is on, that the water's flowing.

Last year, Congress approved an \$18.6 billion reconstruction aid package. According to the CPA, only about \$3.7 billion of that package had been spent as of June 1st. I know CPA was under the DOD, Department of Defense.

I want to ask, Secretary Wolfowitz, what slowed the expenditure of those funds and delayed the 2,300 projects the money was planned to support?

And then, Secretary Armitage, as the State Department now takes over on July 1st, what plans do you have to accelerate the implementation of that reconstruction money?

WOLFOWITZ: Senator Lieberman, I think the basic answer comes down to the rather elaborate and, I guess, I think, necessary procedures that we build into the contracting process to make sure that there's fair and open competition and it produces what the program managers call an S curve, where you don't get very much done for a while, and then suddenly the dam starts to break. And my understanding is, the dam is starting to break and those numbers are going to grow very rapidly.

We want to make sure they don't grow so rapidly that Ambassador Negroponte has nothing left to work with when he gets there. That's a consideration.

One thing that has been done, it's called the Seven Cities Project, is to allocate a certain amount from the supplemental to smaller-scale projects that can be implemented by our division commanders in seven key cities, including Baghdad. And that is showing some real results on the ground, even in difficult places like Sadr City.

ARMITAGE: In preparation for this, I've got later numbers. They're not much better, but obligated out of the \$18.4 billion is \$5.29 billion, which is about 29 percent of the '04 IRF money. So it's a little better than what you suggested, but your point is dead-on.

Admiral Nash came back last week, who's been running this for the CPA, and I think he came up and saw some of the -- at least staff of this committee and others, and he did indicate that the ramp is quite a bit steeper now, and he thought we'd be moving up rather rapidly.

ARMITAGE: What we've done to make this change is through consultations with primarily the Appropriations Committee staffs. And I've met with Chairman Kolbe in the House about this. We're trying to put together something we're calling an Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office under the ambassador.

We're putting a 10-day time period on any changes that we want. From the time the ambassador wants to reallocate money, put it toward a project, the turnaround for our entire bureaucracy is 10 days. I'm the bellybutton in charge. So you will have somebody to point to. And that will also, we think, it will also push the process along.

When John Negroponte gets out there, we figure he'll have between \$8 billion and \$9 billion dollars that is not obligated. And we know he's going to have some different opinions from the present CPA opinions. And we're working out procedures with Appropriations Committee staff to change the way we make changes to the 2207 Report, which is required each quarter.

LIEBERMAN: That's very encouraging, particularly to know that you're assuming that personal responsibility, because if I can put it this way, in response to the metaphor you used, Secretary Armitage,



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I've always considered you to be one tough, impressive bellybutton.

(LAUGHTER)

ARMITAGE: Well, a big bellybutton.

(LAUGHTER)

MYERS: Mr. Chairman?

WARNER: Yes?

MYERS: I would like to talk about the threat for just a minute, because my views might be slightly different than others expressed in this room today, if I could just talk about the threats that we're seeing.

We have no intelligence that shows the linkage between these various groups. We looked for it. We simply don't have it.

You can deduce, because you had many attacks yesterday that all occurred, some of them in Mosul, almost simultaneous, but throughout Iraq, attacks that appeared to be coordinated. I mean, you can just look at it and say, well, there has to be some coordination. The level of coordination, though, is unknown. And I ask about this all of the time, because this is crucial to understanding the threat we're fighting.

One of the things you have to keep in mind, that the former regime elements and Zarqawi, while they may have the same near-term goals of ridding Iraq of the coalition, their long-term goals couldn't be more different.

MYERS: And it's hard for me to believe -- but this is what we need intelligence to tell us -- that there is very close cooperation between those two groups, because they have two very different visions of the future. One is Sunni extremism, going back to a 7th century caliphate, and the other is the Baathist Party coming back to life in Iraq.

And so, I would just say, I have not seen any evidence, other than what we see with our eyes, in terms of actions, whether it's the central nervous system or some other method of coordination.

And it's a critical question, and frankly, the intelligence community, as far as I know, will not give you an answer, because they can't give me an answer.

LEIBERMAN: Mr. Chairman, if I may, real briefly...

WARNER: Yes, please proceed.

LIEBERMAN: ... just to respond and say that I appreciate what you've said, that there's not clear evidence showing a linkage, but I would just raise this question.

Although these are different groups with different aims, might this not be a case where the enemy of my enemy is my friend? In other words, they have a common purpose, which is to stop right now the Iraqi self-government from occurring, to weaken us -- in fact, to defeat us, in some sense -- to get us to retreat and therefore to win a battle in the larger war that both of them are involved in. And that might bring them together temporarily until they have to deal with who's going to control Iraq.

WARNER: Secretary Armitage, did you want to comment on the general's statement? Because I don't want to...

ARMITAGE: No, I gave you my opinion, that it seems to me that there was some sophistication in the attacks that led me to believe -- I've been around a little bit -- that there is more of a central nervous system. I don't argue with General Myers. You asked for my opinion; I gave it to you, sir.

MYERS: I'd say that's how it looks. And I'd say that near-term aims could be similar, the enemy of my friend and so forth. But I think, long term, they're not compatible.

But we need to know a lot more, I guess is what I'm saying. And I'm not comfortable standing here...

WARNER: This question of coordination or lack thereof is a central issue, and I hope that we do not conclude this hearing on a note -- although we may have respectful different perspectives on it, and if that's the case, so be it.

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Senator Allard?

WOLFOWITZ: Mr. Chairman, I'd just say I think there may be more than one central nervous system, and there may be a loose coordination between them.

I mean, Zarqawi clearly coordinates an organization of some size. And clearly, the old regime people have been coordinating with each other for years. And that's, I think, why we see some patterns in certain things the enemy does.

The question that's been raised here is, how much do they coordinate with one another?

WOLFOWITZ: And that's hardly something they open up to us very much.

But I think the basic point is their immediate aim, which is the overriding one, which is to defeat us. And just as we and Stalin had enormously different visions of the future in World War II, but it didn't prevent us from understanding first things first, I'm afraid, for this enemy, we're the first thing to get out of there.

WARNER: All right. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Senator Allard?

ALLARD: Mr. Chairman, thank you.

I want to reflect back a little bit, you know, when Saddam Hussein went into the Persian Gulf conflict, I mean, we set him back. Things kind of sort of stagnated. And then when we decided to take action, it must have been about a year and three months or so now, going into Iraq with a full force, I think a lot of good things have happened.

And my view is that things are better off now than they were before we went into Iraq, and that actually things were deteriorating in Iraq just before we went in. And I'm wondering if the panel could talk about that a little bit.

I had a lot of questions about the insurgency. And obviously, I think we pretty well discussed that.

And then also I wondered if the panel would talk a little bit about the demographics. I mean, there's been TV shows written about the large number of young males in Saudi Arabia, for example, that are unemployed. Do we have that same demographics in Iraq or not? And what is driving that demographics?

And I wondered if we could have some discussion on both of those questions, starting, first of all, with the first question, which is, how are we today compared to what it was when we first went in? And then give us some good facts. And then also, what is happening -- and the second question would be the demographics question.

ARMITAGE: I'll try real quickly.

These are rather unsatisfactory to me, this first answer I'm going to give you, because those who have are better off and those who don't have are obviously not. The haves right now, in terms of Iraq: more people have access to water; more people have access to phones; more people have access to hospitals now than was the case under the Saddam regime, particularly if you're a Shia. So there are all those indicators. There's more electricity going forward.

Now, why I say that's an unsatisfying answer is because power generation, et cetera, are good targets for the enemy. So what's true today could be false temporarily tomorrow.

But I think on almost every measure in that regard, we're much better off.

It is the security, however, which the Iraqi people point to every single day as their overriding concern, and their fear when their sons leave their home and their daughters leave home whether they'll return or not.

ARMITAGE: So I think you can have a lot of measurements for people being better off, but if we can't get the handle on security, I think we all agree, we're not going to be able to say to the Iraqi people, "You're better off overall."

Second, on the demographics, there's a lot of, I think, not

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controversy, but disagreement or misunderstanding of the unemployment in Iraq. It's quite high. And there are a lot of young men, particularly former army young men, who are out of work right now. The estimates are between 28 percent of the working population is unemployed to as high as 60 percent, which I disregard. CPA is telling is 28 to 30 percent of people are unemployed, which is unacceptable.

ALLARD: Secretary Wolfowitz?

WOLFOWITZ: I agree with -- I think, Secretary Armitage stated quite clearly.

I think it might be worth saying that that word "insurgency" sort of implies this is something that rose up after we got there, whereas I think I've said earlier we're, to an astonishing degree, dealing with people who just didn't surrender on April 9th and continue to fight.

But let me hasten to say, part of their strength comes from the fact that they have a lot of money and they can hire those unemployed young men. And there are, unfortunately, large numbers.

So that's why we believe that, in addition to going after the several thousand -- I mean, I would be misleading you to suggest we have an idea of a number, but it's in the thousands. We don't think it's in the tens of thousands.

So the real hardcore killers are a decided minority of this country, but they have money and they can hire people to take shots at us. And that's a significant part of the problem.

ALLARD: Do they get paid more...

WOLFOWITZ: The third area, if I might just say, in terms of dissatisfaction and how it affects security, is that -- and we see it in towns and cities where we're able to get reconstruction work going, the population gets more faith about what we're there to do and more willingness to share intelligence and information with us. It's that 40 to 50 percent of the population that might be considered fence-sitters that are absolutely critical to win over.

ARMITAGE: Senator Allard, if I could, as you'd say up here, revise and extend my remarks, I just want to add something. I think, perhaps, the most significant indicator of how we're better off in Iraq is the quality and the caliber of the people that are participating in the IIG and the courage that they have.

ARMITAGE: I mean, two of the former members of the IGC were killed, and no one turned away, no one dropped out of the game. And now the IIG, under tremendous and personal attacks, they're standing up there. And that has to be something that says something about Iraqi courage and resilience.

And I think we can point to the fact that there are people of courage like that, men and women, in Iraq as a sign we're better off.

ALLARD: General Myers?

MYERS: I would only say that it's already been discussed in the committee that the 30th of June will probably be the best thing we can do for security in Iraq, when Iraqis feel that, and as the polls show, they have a legitimate government that is sovereign and that they can fight for Iraq, and that there is no confusion, no cloud about this being an occupation.

And I would also say that this all goes hand in hand, as I think the other witnesses have already said -- you can't progress in security alone. You've got to have the economic piece, the political piece, which is the 30 June piece, the nearest part that we can look forward to. And then you have to have the security piece. And they all have to march forward together.

ALLARD: The other thing -- I want to drill (ph) down the demographics. We've got apparently a large population of males that are uneducated, unemployed in Iraq.

Isn't there a role for some of our allies, or even countries like France and Germany, for example, who have fairly large Muslim populations, to get those men in some sort of an educational program,

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so they can get some vocational training, goals or whatever? Isn't there a role there for that? Is this something everybody is ignoring? Or are we trying to address that population?

It seems to me that they're the ones of fighting age, and they're the ones with spare time, and they're the ones that we seem to be competing for, as far as this insurgency issue is concerned.

ARMITAGE: I can give you a partially satisfactory answer, I think. I've got the figures that we would cite as the number of Iraqis we employ in the various projects, and actually they're quite impressive. But not having been out, myself, for three to four months, I'm not confident that I've really got my hands around it. But I will provide those for the record.

In terms of our allies, as you recall, about \$13 billion was pledged at the donors conference, and about a billion of that has been dispersed. Some of it is in -- in fact, the great majority of it, is in projects that employ people.

ARMITAGE: I do not, however, know specifically of their vocational training programs that any of our foreign friends have undertaken. I'll provide it for the record, Senator Allard.

Thank you.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator.  
Senator Reed?

REED: Secretary Wolfowitz, in your recent discussions with Prime Minister Allawi, did you discuss his proposal for martial law?

WOLFOWITZ: We didn't discuss it specifically, no, Senator.

REED: I would think that that would be an item of intense interest, since he's announced his intentions. In fact, reports today in the press suggest that plans are being undertaken for types of increased national security provisions or some other euphemism. And you did not discuss it at all?

WOLFOWITZ: We didn't discuss it specifically, unless my memory is failing me here.

But we -- let me be clear. We talked a lot about the need for close consultation on a range of sensitive military issues, including our offensive operations. And a declaration of martial law by him would clearly be such a policy consideration that would require consultation with the mechanisms that Ambassador Negroponte will be running when he is there.

But let me be clear, because I said this earlier, he's not talking about, as I understand it, declaring martial law on a national level. He talked about special measures in specific areas where there are problems, measure like curfews, which we already have the authority to impose.

And, I think, it's giving Iraqi security forces in those areas the kind of authority that coalition forces have already. It's obviously something that will be subject to the coordination of the Iraqi government.

REED: Do you have a position whether martial law, limited, as you described, would be necessary at this time, based upon your extensive experience and personal travels?

WOLFOWITZ: It would depend on the location and the circumstances in the locations.

And what is meant by martial law, Senator?

REED: Well, I would presume curfews, checkpoints, eliminating free assembly, eliminating political opponents who might be contrary to the...

WOLFOWITZ: Well, that's not martial law. And that's out of bounds, the thing you just mentioned.

What I believe, and I going with press reports here, was mentioned were curfews, limitations on assembly and searching houses. And those happen to be all things that our troops do, as appropriate, in specific locations.

WOLFOWITZ: We're dealing with an extremely dangerous security situation. You realize that. And the enemy is taking extreme

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measures to destabilize civil order. And such measures as curfews and searching houses and establishing checkpoints are measures that have to be taken in particular areas. We're doing it ourselves already. REED: Well, one of the issues that was raised in this whole discussion of martial law is the capacity of the Iraqi security forces to do it themselves. I noticed that they are not ready yet for employment, and it would invariably, I think, draw in United States forces, either in a supporting role or even in a primary role. Is that your conclusion, too?

WOLFOWITZ: We retain control over our forces. They retain control over theirs. The purpose of consulting is where we may undertake actions that affect them or vice versa. We've been doing this for a long time in Afghanistan with President Karzai. He, at times, wants to do things which might be perfectly within his prerogative to do, but we will tell him, "If you can do it with your own forces, your own capability, you're entitled to do that. But we're under no obligation to enforce something that you simply decide you want to do." The same thing would happen in Iraq. If Prime Minister Allawi decides that it is appropriate to have martial law in some area and we think not, it's going to be up to him with his own forces to be able to enforce that.

REED: Well, Mr. Secretary, I think, listening to all of you gentlemen this morning, I'm confused about the strategy. The strategy seems to be: Let the Iraqis do it, that we have to put Iraqi face on this.

Yet they don't have the capability to do it alone. The suggestion that they can carve out pieces of the country, put their security forces in, even if we disapprove, I think is not reflective of the situation on the ground. And what you're describing is also perhaps a potential for strategic paralysis, where they want to do something, we don't want to do something.

And I think the poster for that is, of course, Fallujah. Mr. Secretary, you were here several weeks ago, reading an impassioned letter for a young Marine that said this is the next Bellawood; we're going to finish it today. Of course, a few days later we turned it over to someone who looked remarkably like Saddam Hussein as the general to control it. And you've indicated today that's still a situation that's out of control.

There just doesn't seem to be a strategy that's going to work.

WOLFOWITZ: Senator Reed, I think the strategy is clear, which is not to change things overnight, because you can't change situations like this overnight, but to build their capacity over time and as rapidly as possible.

WOLFOWITZ: And the important thing, as Secretary Armitage referred to a few minutes ago, we have incredibly courageous Iraqi leaders who are determined to succeed here, who have indicated in all manner of ways that they are committed to a free Iraq, a democratic Iraq, but also understand the nature of the enemy that they're confronting. And their own lives are on the line in doing this. It's the nature of coalition warfare -- and this is a coalition between the multinational force and the Iraqis -- that you have to come to some compromises about at least some coordination of policy. And I think we are in agreement that the Fallujah situation needs to be changed. But we didn't change our approach to Fallujah because the Iraqis might veto what we might do. We changed our approach to Fallujah because, after consulting with the Iraqis, it was concluded that the effects of continuing with large-scale military operations in Fallujah would be sufficiently negative in the rest of the country, that it was better to go with this compromise to see what results it would produce and then proceed from there.

ARMITAGE: Senator Reed, if I may, the context of the Fallujah decision is important, because we were trying to stand up and assist

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the efforts of Lakhdar Brahimi to get an interim government. And this was the Fallujah activity and the heavy military involvement by the United States that was very much interfering with our ability to put together what I think all hands would agree is a pretty impressive interim government of Iraq, sir.

REED: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator Reed.

Senator Sessions?

SESSIONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we've had a valuable hearing this morning.

You know, I'd just like to ask one thing about, sometimes the media and sometimes what we in Congress and what our commentators say, what kind of impact that might have on our success, our troops and the potential success for the people of Iraq.

One of the things that's concerned me -- we've had a number of hearings with regard to the terrible abuses that occurred in Abu Ghraib prison, but the evidence, the policy directives, the memorandums, the commands that we've seen that were sent to those guards indicate clearly they were not told to do any of these things, and it exceeded any powers they may have had, and they were in violation. They're being prosecuted, General Myers, as you indicated earlier, and they're being disciplined for that.

SESSIONS: Secretary Wolfowitz, isn't it true that we need to be careful that when we make criticisms of our military and our government, and the policy that we have, we need to found those on true facts; we don't need to exaggerate the problems we have? We had a real problem. We certainly don't need to exaggerate it.

And how did that impact our success potential in Iraq?

WOLFOWITZ: Well, as we said earlier, we are, in no small measure, in an information war, and the enemy is very good at spreading lies. I think we have to be very careful, especially where we're talking about something like this, to make sure that we have our facts right.

It is a great strength of this country, and I felt it was appreciated in Iraq, that unlike not only the previous government in Iraq, but most governments that they're familiar with, we don't condone abuse, we don't tolerate abuse. We, in fact, expose it when it happens, and we punish it. And that, I think they're noticing, is a very different way of proceeding.

But I think it's also important, without minimizing the abuses or minimizing our horror at the abuses, not to loosely characterize things that were done that were not done.

SESSIONS: Well, I know it complicates the lives and the work of our people and could even put them at risk.

And we had recently seven prisoners who had been prisoners under Saddam Hussein, who did nothing more than deal in currency, apparently, at some point, American currency, in the course of their business. And I think many of them were in Abu Ghraib, and they had their hands chopped off.

And when I asked about the abuse by Americans in the prison system at the press conference I attended, one of the Iraqis that lost his hand said, "Well, the Americans, it's not their policy. They criticized it. They're conducting investigations, and they're punishing people who did wrong."

And that's a lot different from Saddam Hussein, who wanted a video -- and we saw the video -- he wanted a video to make sure that he personally saw these punishments being carried out. So it's a big change has occurred in Iraq, and I wanted to make that point.

SESSIONS: One of the things that strikes me and that we've said here earlier as so important is the courage of the leaders of Iraq. Prime Minister Allawi appeared recently when that horrible bombing attack occurred that killed, I believe it was, 13 people who were waiting to sign up to be policeman in Iraq, to fight terrorism. And within hours or within an hour, he was on the scene, right

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there, and made these comments, which I thought was important. He said, "'It's a cowardly attack aimed at the stability of Iraq, aimed the people of Iraq,' Allawi said, sweat glistening from his forehead. 'The government of Iraq is determined to go ahead and confront the enemy. Justice will prevail.'"

Is that the kind of thing -- to me, that's the kind of thing we've got to have.

I believe he also responded to the attack on the oil pipeline. Secretary Armitage, do you have any thoughts about this kind of event and how important it is?

ARMITAGE: Well, it, I think, goes hand and glove with what I was suggesting about less invisibility. When our two excellent spokesmen, General Kimmitt or Mr. Senor, would make that same announcement, it doesn't carry near the import of a prime minister standing out there, as you suggest, with sweat on his brow, saying, "This is against Iraqis. This is against us. This is not about occupiers. You're killing us."

I think it also says something, by the way, that the 13 people who were killed in the mentioned explosion were trying to sign up in what is probably the most dangerous occupation in Iraq these days, that of a policeman. Why? Clearly because the police ultimately are going to be what provides local and neighborhood security, which then provides security for a whole city, which provides security for a whole district. And the terrorists know that; that's why they're targeting these guys.

WOLFOVITZ: Senator Sessions, I think there's a connection between the two things you commented on. One was the horrors of the old regime, and the other is the courage of the people in standing up to build a new Iraq.

I think one of the things that inspires their courage is the recognition of how horrible the past was and what a horrible future the terrorists and their Saddamist allies would like to bring Iraq back to.

WOLFOVITZ: I think I said it earlier, the terrorists' great strength is their ability to kill and destroy in horrible ways. But it's also their great weakness. They offer no positive vision for the country.

And I go back to what that father of that impressive young interpreter I mentioned in my opening comments whose sister was assassinated by the enemy because she was working with us. And when asked why do you still work with us after that, and she said, "My father told me, you mustn't retreat in the face of evil," the Iraqis understand the evil of the past. It causes a lot of problems. It's, in some ways, a tortured country. But I think it also produces a great deal of courage to stand up in the face of it.

SESSIONS: Well, I thank all of you for the work and the commitment you have given to this. I do believe that we're at a point where we've got to be there. We've got to be strong. And they've got to know that they have our support and that we're not going to cut and run.

And then, I think they'll step up, and that they'll continue to step up. And I'm pleased to see people are signing up to be policemen, even though they are being targeted. That's also a very good indication.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: And, Senator, we thank you for bringing back some of those historical benchmarks as we look at today's problems. Senator Ben Nelson?

BEN NELSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for your service, your commitment and for being here with us today. We appreciate it.

For some time now, I've been an advocate and a proponent, in particular, for more NATO involvement. And I know that you all share the interest in internationalizing, on a greater basis, the effort in



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Iraq.

And last month, I sent Secretary Powell a letter stating this, and suggested that for the U.S. government to be asking, for the administration to be asking for NATO's support, may not be putting the best foot forward, particularly as it related to the president speaking to President Chirac most recently.

I have felt, and I continue to feel, that the best proponent for that NATO involvement, the best petitioner, would be Prime Minister Allawi. And now I understand the president is taking the prime minister's letter to NATO right now to ask for that support.

Once again, if we're going to take the training wheels off, we need to talk about sovereignty. And, in this sense, I'm more interested in that they appear to be the petitioner rather than a puppet.

BEN NELSON: And so I wonder how we believe we're going to get the right kind of result, how we're going to get a "yes" when we've been getting, in some cases polite, in some cases a little less polite "noes" so far.

And I would leave it up to either of you, Secretary Armitage or Secretary Wolfowitz, to respond.

ARMITAGE: Senator Nelson, I'll give it a go.

The prime minister's letter was, of course, to Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer of NATO, which, I think, puts him right in the spot that you were suggesting to Secretary Powell: Go to NATO, let NATO and the secretary-general bring this forward.

In my understanding, that is the discussion that the secretary-general wants to have. We are, obviously, going to support it. I don't think we can...

BEN NELSON: But we're a fairly expensive courier too, aren't we?

ARMITAGE: Well, we are couriers, but the president's going to be there anyway...

BEN NELSON: OK

ARMITAGE: ... so he'll speak up.

Both Paul and I have spoken in Brussels to the NAC about these matters, not putting ourselves in the position of being the [\*\*\*\*]. We wanted to just have the discussion about what the equities were in Iraq.

And if we're successful, and that is a democratic country, you've just changed the Middle East in a way that was unfathomable four years ago, and trying to get NATO friends interested in this.

I believe they are. We've had several discussions with the secretary-general. He is going to carry the water at Istanbul. But we're certainly not going to shy away from supporting him fully. We've made our views known on this.

BEN NELSON: Mr. Secretary?

WOLFOWITZ: It's worth pointing out that 15 of the 33 coalition partners are NATO allies, and some 18,000 NATO troops are serving alongside us in Iraq today, not as NATO, but in their national capacities, and quite heroically. And I think some 100 coalition soldiers have lost their lives in this fight already, to date. It is the case that NATO's capacity has been whittled down enormously over the last 10 years, and we're finding that our allies are stretched pretty thin just to support what they are already committed to in Afghanistan.

And we're working with them. We're hoping for more. We're hoping particularly that some who haven't contributed yet, like the French and the Germans, might be able to contribute to the U.N. protection mission in Iraq.

BEN NELSON: And we are looking for that, in some capacity, training security forces...

WOLFOWITZ: Exactly.

BEN NELSON: ... rather than providing operational forces.

WOLFOWITZ: Well, and that's exactly what I wanted to say, because the prime minister has later emphasized that our NATO allies

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have a lot of capacity to train and equip Iraqi forces. And that could be a very helpful contribution that doesn't put additional strain on their own forces.

BEN NELSON: But on the basis of perception versus reality, it just struck me that if we're going -- you can't be partially sovereign any more than you're sort of unique. It seems to me that it would have been better for Prime Minister Allawi to go and become the petitioner and make his presence known in that request.

ARMITAGE: If I may, my understanding is Foreign Minister Zebari is going to fulfill that role...

BEN NELSON: He's not taking the letter apparently.

ARMITAGE: Pardon me?

BEN NELSON: But he's not carrying the letter?

ARMITAGE: No, the letter's been sent. Every NATO member has it; we have it. But he's going to fulfill that role.

There's a question about whether the prime minister, at this crucial time of turnover, should be out of the country. I would argue no. And that's why he's not there.

BEN NELSON: I see.

WOLFOWITZ: Senator Nelson, I don't think we're the ones carrying the letter. My understanding is the letter went on Monday by whatever courier system from the prime minister directly to the secretary-general.

BEN NELSON: All right, thank you.

My other question is, as we -- and I understand the analogy about a bet, but I hope we're not into a gamble de jour, as we move forward. We look at Fallujah, we expected laying down of the arms, that we would be liberators not occupiers, that the number of troops that we took to accomplish our mission were based on certain assumptions. We may not have secured the ammunition dumps. I know it's a very difficult task, but we didn't do that. Now, we're facing IED explosive devices. We didn't keep the peace in order to win the peace, because law and order broke down at certain points. You know, do we have a backup, just in case the security efforts that we expect to get from the Iraqi people fighting for themselves doesn't materialize the way we believe and hope and maybe bet that it will?

WOLFOWITZ: Senator, I think you always have to be prepared to adjust, and especially adjust the schedule.

WOLFOWITZ: And we acknowledge that it's been slower, partly because of our own procedures on our side, getting some equipment in the hands of Iraqi forces, for example.

I think we will meet that schedule. And I think if we don't, we just have to, I think, be prepared to be a little more patient.

I think the ultimate goal is an Iraq that is governed by Iraqis and defended by Iraqis. That's really the only formula for success. And I think it's worked in many other places over the last 50 years. I think it can work there.

ARMITAGE: If I may, Senator Nelson, I think it's interesting to note that, even with the horror of the beheadings and the terrible tragedies there, that some of our coalition partners have actually extended their mandates with overwhelming votes in their parliaments -- the Italians, for instance, the Dutch.

BEN NELSON: The Koreans.

ARMITAGE: The Koreans, who went ahead in the face of this.

So I apologize for even using betting terminology. I didn't mean to be so frivolous.

BEN NELSON: No, I understand.

ARMITAGE: But we are making the assumption, and I believe a good assumption, that Iraqis will fight for Iraq in a way, with more enthusiasm than they fight for what's seen as an occupying power.

BEN NELSON: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: Senator Dayton?

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DAYTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the sentiments that have been expressed by my colleagues on both sides of the aisle here, that it's imperative that we succeed in Iraq both in reality and national and international perception.

And I'm concerned because -- and this parallels some of the other questions that have been asked, but I want to go into it again, because our troops have been heroically performing there for over a year. They have won the victories that the president initially said were the primary reasons for this war. You know, they toppled Saddam's Hussein. They eliminated or captured him, his sons and most of his henchmen. They determined conclusively that there are no weapons of mass destruction that threaten our security.

It seems to me that now our mission, and therefore the preconditions for our success, in Iraq have been expanded.

The president said, at his speech at the War College last month -- here's a quote: "Our agenda is freedom and independence, security and prosperity for the Iraqi people."

How long is it realistically going to take before we could imagine that we would see Iraq achieve that level of progress?

DAYTON: Either Secretary Wolfowitz, Secretary Armitage.

I mean, we need (ph) more policy than military.

WOLFOWITZ: I think it's important to keep some historical perspective here. First of all, we were absolutely clear from the beginning that we had to win the peace as well as win the war. And we are still fighting the war. I would not say the majority of Saddam's henchmen have been defeated. Unfortunately, they're a significant part of the enemy that we're facing, and they're still out there.

And Saddam himself didn't surrender until he was captured, and his close associate, Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, hasn't surrendered yet. He's probably funding terrorism...

DAYTON: Top henchman, I stand corrected.

WOLFOWITZ: Well, no, it's actually some of the more junior ones who are the real professional killers, like the members of this Mukhabarat unit called the M14. It's the so-called anti-terrorism unit -- excuse me, it's George Orwell at work. They specialize in kidnappings, hijackings, bombings and assassinations. And they're still doing bombings and assassinations.

So the enemy is still out there. It is an evil enemy. The Iraqi people know what an evil enemy it is, and they know what evils it did in the past.

The key to winning here is building Iraqi capacity. We hope we can do it faster than in Germany at the end of World War II. But I mentioned earlier, it wasn't until 1948 that we suddenly -- I mean, suddenly we came in with the Marshall Plan because we saw Europe going down the tube. It's been decades in Korea, and I'm not -- I hope it's not decades in Iraq.

But patience is important here, I think, particularly because -- and it's a kind of paradox -- the more patient we are, the less we'll have to wait. The more people are convinced that we're not leaving -- and I welcome Senator Kennedy's comment earlier. I hope everyone on the enemy's side and our side in Iraq understands Americans are not cutting and running.

DAYTON: Mr. Secretary...

WOLFOWITZ: ... Iraqis are not cutting and running. And the sooner everybody understands that, the sooner at least the less hardcore enemy will say, "OK. I give up," especially if this government can find ways to peel off the less-evil-doers and kind of bring them back...

DAYTON: Mr. Secretary, I don't know anybody here who's talking about cutting and running. And I really, you know...

(CROSSTALK)

DAYTON: Let me make my comment, please. We're put in this position, and words are used by either colleagues or the

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administration, you know, that we lack resolve, we're cutting and running, we're going to be defeated. I'm saying we won -- our forces, our troops heroically won victories they were sent for. And there are 140,000 of them over there now, and their families are back in Minnesota and other states. And, sir, they're not patient. And I don't think it's realistic to expect them to be patient. And I talked with a lot of the men and women who served over there who are back in Minnesota. They're proud of what they did, and no one's complaining about being there, really, in the bottom of the corps (ph). But they're not patient to come home. And they shouldn't have to be, sir, because these are matters of policy. And that's why I really am offended that when we ask the challenging questions here, even more by some of our colleagues who were accused of not supporting our troops. I support our troops. I want to bring them home safely as soon as possible, with their victory secured. And I know you do, too. But I want to...

WOLFOWITZ: Senator...

(CROSSTALK)

DAYTON: No, I'm not done.

We have a responsibility to the American people and especially to the families of those who are serving over there and to those who are serving there themselves to be straight with them about what we've put them in there for at this point now and when we expect to have them come home.

I asked General Casey yesterday. Then I'll give you a chance to respond, sir. I'm sorry, Senator Clinton asked General Casey how long he thought we were going to be keeping this current force level; the 140,000 is what he identified. And he said, as the chairman pointed out, for planning purposes, they're talking about keeping that force level there through February of 2007. That's a long time from now. Is that we've really got ourselves into here, that kind of force state for that period of time?

WOLFOWITZ: Senator Dayton, first of all, I share your impatience to win this thing. And we are very impatient when it comes to things like building up Iraqi security forces, because that's how we're going to win.

I only meant -- and believe me, I was welcoming the fact that nobody that hear in responsible positions is talking about cutting and running. And I think it's very important that that message is clear to all Iraqis.

What General Casey talked about is a planning assumption, which is to say you figure out how you will manage if that's the way things turn out. It's not a prediction. I think anyone would be kind of foolish to make predictions. I don't think General Casey was.

I mean, Bosnia, which was a much simpler situation, turned out to be longer than it was predicted initially. We've made steady progress there. It's eight years later, and we're about to finally end that mission.

WOLFOWITZ: Korea and Europe, which were really high-stakes missions, like this one, have lasted a long time.

I'm most impatient though, sir, not at the numbers issue, but at getting Iraqis in the front lines so that they are the ones who are doing the fighting. And if our troops are there, at least they can be there in relative safety in a supporting role.

That, I think, is what we're working for. That is General Abizaid's strategy, as we could lay it out for you in a classified session. It's to put us in the supporting role and the Iraqis in the front row.

It's working in some places. It's working up in Mosul. It seems to be working down in Basra. We'd like to see it working all over the country.

DAYTON: Well, my time's up. I just want to clarify one point, if I may, because I met with some Iraqi citizens in Minnesota last weekend, half of whom are now American citizens and others here

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legally. And they said that -- a couple of them had been in Iraq just recently, and one of them, in particular, in Baghdad, in the last several weeks.

He said that the electricity situation in Baghdad is now typically eight hours on, 16 hours off, and sometimes it's worse than that. Is that accurate?

WOLFOWITZ: I can't speak to his precise numbers. The sabotage levels are very high, and that produces a lot of shortages.

Actually, the production is up. It's now considerably up over what it was pre-war. Demand is also up. I mean, when you fly over Baghdad, you see every roof just covered with satellite dishes, and people are buying air conditioners that they never had before. The supply is growing, but the demand is growing as well.

DAYTON: My question, Mr. Secretary, is that an accurate statement of the condition in Baghdad -- eight hours on, 16 hours off?

WOLFOWITZ: I'd have to check. I don't think it's that bad, but there are a lot of blackouts.

(CROSSTALK)

DAYTON: ... provide that response for the record, if you don't have it accurately.

WOLFOWITZ: General Myers...

MYERS: Well, I don't have it accurately, but there has been terrific sabotage against transformers and power lines in recent days. Prior to that, we had produced more electricity than Iraq has ever seen in its history. And now, the ability to distribute that is impacted by the attacks on the infrastructure.

We have mitigation efforts under way right now to mitigate that.

DAYTON: Having been there in the summer, that is close to the situation. Whatever the circumstances, I realize there are those sabotages going on -- refrigeration, air conditioning and running water. And, you know, the population, that's one of the reasons they're not happy.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator.

I want to make sure that on the issue of bringing the troops back, each of the witnesses had adequate opportunity to reply to Senator Dayton's question.

ARMITAGE: Just if I may, bringing the troops back will be a function of security, so I defer to my colleagues.

But this is the Armed Services Committee. I think it's fair also to commend, in addition to the 140,000 heroic troops who serve, the hundreds of diplomats who serve and, by the way, don't carry guns and have served and will continue to serve there. They are your citizens as well, and they're our sons and daughters as well.

And I know this is not a committee that normally talks about diplomats, but I represent them now, so I appreciate the opportunity to put that in.

WARNER: Thank you, Secretary.

Yes, General?

DAYTON: And we appreciate their service.

WARNER: Just a minute, Senator Dayton. Let's just let the panel finish.

General Myers?

MYERS: Mr. Chairman and Senator Dayton, I would just add that we're going to do prudent, worst-case planning, which may have been what General Casey referred to. I didn't hear his comments. But we're going to continue to do that, so we can continue to source and provide the kind of predictability that some units haven't had. And so we've got to do that.

But nobody is predicting the force levels right now. General Abizaid has said he needs several months after the interim government stands up and then he's going to take a look at where we are.

DAYTON: I want to be very clear. General Casey said this was planning, not making predictions...

MYERS: Right. Good.

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DAYTON: And, Mr. Secretary, I share your view about the diplomats and others who are performing heroically there as well.

ARMITAGE: And we're going to be there for a lot longer than 2007. Our planning is way out there.

WARNER: All right. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Now we'll go to Senator Akaka.

AKAKA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Wolfowitz, this past Tuesday, at a House Armed Service Committee hearing, you were asked about mistakes made in Iraq. In your answer, you mentioned that you believed a mistake was made by not having the funding flexibility to fuel Iraqi security forces faster, and that it has taken too long to get equipment but it is finally arriving.

You stated, and I'll quote, "If we had been a little less fussy about competitive contracting and a little more eager to get guns and radios in the hands of Iraqi police, it could have been done faster," unquote.

AKAKA: I must tell you that that statement troubles me.

Congress has appropriated billions of dollars in support of DOD's efforts in Iraq. And I believe the real problem is inconsistent administrative oversight and a lack of a systematic control on the part of the department.

My question is, can you please explain further what you meant when you said that if we had been a little less fussy about the competitive contracting?

WOLFOWITZ: I don't think I really mean that we should have been less fussy. I think we have very elaborate procedures for letting contracts.

And, for example, one critical contract that was for equipping Iraqi security forces was awarded. It took some time to award it, because of all the procedures that we have to go through to do a request for proposal and all of the things that go with it. And then it was appealed.

And when it was appealed -- "fussy" is the wrong word -- the lawyers told us you can't now go and use Iraqi funds to purchase the same things because that would be seen as going around the appeals process. So we added another couple of months, I think, before that was resolved.

When you talked to our commanders, they say the money that we get through the commanders' emergency reserve program that comes straight to us is bid competitively. It's bid at a local level. It's bid without all of the large contracting apparatus that seems to grow, as you go up the food chain. And they get, I think, very good value for the money, and it is done competitively.

So we should be fussy about how money is spent, particularly the American taxpayer money. But I think sometimes our procedures are cumbersome, and they're oriented more toward peacetime economic development programs and don't recognize that, in wartime, these kinds of projects are every bit as important as tank, ammunition, and we find a way to do those things more expeditiously. That's really all I meant, Senator.

AKAKA: As you know, in my questioning of our hearings, I've been almost exclusively asking about contractors. And so, I'm concerned about contracting and...

WOLFOWITZ: You're right to be.

AKAKA: I also have a follow-up question on contracting practices in Iraq. The recent prison abuse scandal has highlighted that there are many private contractors working in Iraq.

Can you tell me, is the department administering some sort of tracking mechanism of all of these contracted personnel? And if so, who in the department is responsible for maintaining and tracking both American-contracted employees as well as contracted employees from other countries?

WOLFOWITZ: There are many, many different categories of

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contractors. And let me try -- and General Myers or Secretary Armitage might have a different view. Contractors that work for the U.S. military, we have certain responsibilities for, both for their conduct and for their protection.

There are a large number of other contractors that work in Iraq. They are there basically on their own, under obligations of Iraqi law. They are largely responsible for their own security.

There is, I guess you might say, a middle ground where there are contractors which are in that latter category, but they're executing important reconstruction projects, many of them, in fact, funded out of our congressionally appropriated supplemental.

And their security is a matter, in the first instance, of their responsibility, but it is a matter of concern for us. And our military commanders try to establish communications with those contractors so that, in emergencies, we can hopefully back them up. Obviously, the tragedy that happened with the four Blackwater contractors in Fallujah is an example of where we weren't able to help them, unfortunately.

General Myers, do you want to add to that?

MYERS: No, I think going forward, after 30th June, that the amenity that will be afforded to the U.S. armed forces will also be afforded to contractors that are working for the United States government, as well as foreign liaison personnel.

And so they are going to be protected as long as they are performing the duties they were contracted to perform, and that they will continue to have the inherent right of self-defense, all of the contractors that are performing in Iraq.

MYERS: It's also true that the multinational force will have the authority post-30 June to protect contractors. And it will be up to the commander of the multinational force, General Casey, now that he's being confirmed, and the contractors to work out where that will occur.

AKAKA: Thank you for your responses.

My time has expired. But let me say that I have been particularly concerned about the line of command and the way in which the contractors come under that line. So we will be talking about that later.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: We thank you very much, Mr. Akaka.  
Senator Bayh.

BAYH: Thank you, Chairman.

And, gentlemen, thank you. These hearings are important, but so are you other responsibilities. And I'm well aware that it takes some time to prepare for these things. So your trial by ordeal is about concluded.

I have three questions. First, I would like to touch upon the stakes in the struggle in which we are engaged and the consequences to our nation's security if we are ultimately not successful; secondly, how we hope to win; and, finally, what contributions toward our success we can expect from the Iraqis in the nearer term.

First, as you're well aware, there were differences of opinion about embarking upon this course of action, but we're there now.

And I'd like, in particular, to get your opinions about two things: First, if we were to withdraw precipitously, would those who are adverse to the interests of the United States of America, in all likelihood, after a period of violence, seize control of Iraq? That's number one.

And number two, have these people articulated any positive agenda for that country? Do they have political demands, or are they simply opposed to the democracy and freedom we are attempting to create there?

So, that's another way of saying, is there any alternative to a struggle to try to suppress them, because they have no positive agenda that they are pursuing in the political process?



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BAYH: So, number one, are our adversaries likely to seize control of the country if we do not persevere? And secondly, do they have any positive agenda, is there any grounds for negotiation, or is this simply a struggle that we must persevere in and ultimately succeed?

WOLFOWITZ: I think you used the word "precipitously," and I think that's the key. Ultimately, and hopefully sooner rather than later, we hope, in fact, we can significantly reduce our presence and our role. But it has to be keyed not to a particular date, it has to be keyed to the building of Iraqi capacity.

I think it is remarkable the extent to which this enemy offers no positive vision at all. I mean, we have a group of death worshipers, on the one hand, in Mr. Zarqawi and his people who believe in blowing themselves up so they can blow up other people, and we have the killers from the old regime who have been doing that sort of torture and chopping off of hands and cutting of tongues that Senator Sessions referred to earlier for several decades.

And I think that is -- and I'll say it again -- I think that's why so many Iraqis are prepared to stand up and fight for what they call -- very often the phrase seems to be "a new Iraq." I think it means a free Iraq, it means things that we Americans, I think will like, but for them it's a new Iraq, and it's the newness that's important. And it has to be their country.

And I think our great strategic advantage is that the enemy offers nothing.

BAYH: It seems to me we're involved here as a test of the perseverance and the staying power of the American public. And the reason for my question is, I anticipated your answer, it seems to me that there is no positive agenda on the part of our adversaries, and in fact they would be hostile to the interests of the United States of America. And I think it's important for the American people to be aware of that, because that will obviously factor into their support for the cause upon which we've embarked.

General?

(CROSSTALK)

MYERS: Senator Bayh, if I may, you asked what the stakes are, and I think the stakes go far beyond Iraq. I think Iraq is very important, and I think it has all the potential that Secretary Armitage said, but this goes back to a question that was asked earlier, where we showed U.S. resolve in 1983 in Beirut in a certain manner. We did it later on in Somalia. We did it after the Cole attack.

MYERS: We did it after Khobar Towers.

This adversary is -- their aim is -- it's an extremist movement -- their aim is to go back to the 7th century and establish a caliphate for Muslim nations.

That is the threat. That is a very extreme threat. That is bigger than Iraq, but Iraq is a crucial battleground for them because what they're counting on is the same sort of reaction they saw in 1983, the same sort of reaction they've seen every time we've been tested.

And then it goes to the question that Senator Sessions talked about, which is the test of wills and resolve. This is clearly a test of wills. It's clearly a test of our patience. I think it's absolutely essential to our national security.

As the military adviser to the president and National Security Council, I personally don't think there's been a greater threat to our national security than this type of extremism. Through a few perpetrators on September 11th, 2001, it was 19 individuals that brought down the World Trade Center, killed 3,000 individuals, and hit the Pentagon and killed several hundred more.

BAYH: It's important for the American people to know what the stakes are, both on the upside, as Secretary Armitage mentioned...

MYERS: Couldn't be higher...

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BAYH: ... concerning democracy, but also on the downside, if we are ultimately not successful.

MYERS: Could not be higher, in my opinion.

ARMITAGE: If you'll allow me?

BAYH: Yes. And then I do want to get to my second question.

But please, no, please go ahead.

ARMITAGE: What has happened in the last couple of weeks in the Middle East is rather amazing. You've had Arab League, you've had the OIC, the Islamic Conference -- Organization of Islamic Countries -- come out and put a forward, very positive view -- forward-looking, very positive view of the new Iraqi government.

Now, why do I underline this? That government is not yet democratic, but the whole aim of that government is to get a democracy in the Middle East by December or January of 2005. And you put that together with what came out of the G-8 in terms of what is now being called modernization in the greater Middle East, which is another word for reform, and you've got some real movement that could be thwarted in the Middle East, in general, if we don't follow through and if we're not successful.

BAYH: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

My second and now final question has to do with how do we win.

We've established here that our adversaries are not engaged in the political process. They reject civil society. They have a view that they would like to impose akin to the dark ages.

BAYH: And it seems to me unlikely that at least in the foreseeable future, we will be able to kill them all.

So how do we ultimately win this?

And here's the point that I'd like to get to: It seems to me that ultimately it's the Iraqi people themselves that need to reject these extreme elements and themselves make the conditions within which they flourish no longer existent in that society.

Things are fairly good in the north. With some exceptions, they are fairly good in the south.

So am I correct in saying what we're really talking about here is the Sunni part of the country?

Which gets to my question. What will it take to enlist the Sunnis in the cause of building a democratic, stable Iraq.

And, as has been mentioned by some of my colleagues: What are the benchmarks that we're seeking to -- how will we know that we're making progress with the Sunnis, and the Sunnis themselves rejecting these sorts of extremist elements in their own midst?

Because I'm assuming without the Sunnis ultimately coming on board, it's going to be very difficult to establish the kind of security, given the asymmetry here, that we're going to need for a democracy to be successful?

ARMITAGE: You're dead right, got to have them on board.

I believe one of the things that has been accomplished by the Iraqi interim government that really helped calm part of the Sunni population down was the number of Sunnis who participate and the level. You saw one of them, the president, who happens to be a leading tribal sheik as well.

So the first element of bringing them on board is to make sure that they understand that they have a future in the new Iraq and they won't be disenfranchised. That's number one.

Number two: They've got to see that some Sunnis do hold positions of legitimate and real power, which I think they see.

Number three: We've got to do a better job. And one of the mistakes that I have testified with Paul about, that I think we made is we didn't empower the tribal sheiks to a higher degree earlier on. So we've got to continue that.

Four: We have to continue to bring down the unemployment in the Sunni areas, which our military commanders, I think, are doing a fantastic job by use of the CERP funds.

So all of the elements are there. And they are coming together.

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Now, will they, Senator, I don't know. I think so.

WOLFOWITZ: I would add, I mean, I think Saddam practiced almost equal opportunity oppression. I mean, he killed enormous numbers of Sunnis as well.

And I think part of our problem, throughout the country and particularly in Sunni areas, is people don't like to be occupied. In fact, I think it was General Mattis had a mayor out near Fallujah, who was a Sunni, said to him, "In my heart, I want you to leave tomorrow.

WOLFOWITZ: "In my head, I know I need you for a while longer."

I met up in Mosul with this very courageous governor who on April 9th, when they were under attack from the enemy, stood his ground through the night in the government house. And while the police were unreliable, the Civil Defense Corps people and the Facilities Protection Service people stood their ground. They were able to fight off the enemy knowing that we were there to help as needed, but they didn't need us. It's a wonderful story. And this man is a Sunni Arab.

I think having them have their own government, their own country, and getting us out of the situation of making them an occupied country I think will help, particularly -- it'll help with everyone, but I think particularly with the Sunni Arabs.

BAYH: Last thing I'd say -- and, Mr. Chairman, thank you for your forbearance -- General, I would assume that the -- since I'm on, as Senator Roberts, Warner and others, are on both the Intelligence and the Armed Services Committee -- I would assume that another indicator will be the intelligence flow that we're getting that enable us to conduct some of these pinpoint strikes in Fallujah and in places like that, the extent to which Sunnis and others are saying, "Look, here's where the bad guys are. We don't want them in our midst anymore. Help us eradicate them."

MYERS: Absolutely essential, and absolutely has to be part of it, Senator. You're right.

And what, I think, General Casey will work on very hard -- because we've already started with his predecessor -- and that is how do we share information. I mean, we got to be able to move information around very quickly in this type of a threat environment. And so there's some structural things that need to be done, as well. And we've got to be willing to share. They've got to be willing to share. So far, the Iraqis have been very willing to share information with us. And we need more of that type of help. Absolutely.

BAYH: Thank you very much, gentleman.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator. Particularly that last question that goes to the heart of what we're trying to work with. Senator Pryor?

PRYOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Wolfowitz, I'd like to focus, if I could, for a minute on Mr. Zarqawi. I'd like to ask if he is or is not AL Qaida. And the reason I'm asking this is in today's New York Times -- I'll quote it. It says, "Intelligence officials say it is not clear if Mr. Zarqawi is an associate or a rival of Mr. bin Laden." And then it goes on to talk about he's shown a propensity to target Shiite Muslims whereas apparently Osama bin Laden is trying to unify the Arab world -- or the Muslim world. But I'd like to get your thoughts on is he or is he not AL Qaida?

WOLFOWITZ: I think the relationship between him and bin Laden is murky. He was running a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan under the Taliban when bin Laden was in charge. He seems to have an association that goes back some ways.

WOLFOWITZ: That's why we talk about him as associated, though, rather than -- he obviously shows a streak of independence.

He's not just an anti-Iraqi terrorist, he's done terrorist actions in Jordan. In fact, he was involved in the millennium plot in Jordan back in the year 2000.

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He's been involved -- I think we're pretty certain about this -- in plots in Georgia, in the former Soviet Union, in London, in Paris. I mean, this is a worldwide terrorist with probably his own ambitions. I think the important point is, he's a killer.

PRYOR: And he's on the loose in Iraq.

WOLFOWITZ: Yes.

PRYOR: Now, I understand that we're in an open session here, and I'm sensitive to that, and if you can't comment, I'd like to follow up in a different forum. But did we have a chance to take Zarqawi out of the equation in the early days of the campaign in Iraq, maybe even before we started in the war phase of Iraq?

WOLFOWITZ: There's some legends around about maybe we had a chance, that we could have gotten him in August of 2002, I guess. I don't think that's true.

There was a major strike on the facility in northeastern Iraq with which he's associated at the beginning of the war, and a considerable number of this Ansar al-Islam group, which again I think is separate, but affiliated -- separate from either Zarqawi or Al Qaida. A lot of them were killed, and some important intelligence was collected. But we don't think Mr. Zarqawi was there at the time.

PRYOR: And, General Myers, you agree with that?

MYERS: Yes. I don't think we have enough information to make that judgment. We know he was affiliated to some degree with Ansar al-Islam, who had this enclave in northeastern Iraq, but his exact whereabouts, when and where, we were never certain of that.

PRYOR: That's fair enough.

Secretary Armitage, recently you were quoted as saying, quote, "The U.N. Security Council resolution will make it very clear that this is a fully sovereign Iraqi government. We will only be in Iraq under U.N. mandate, with the invitation of the government of Iraq. They have invited us in. They can invite us out. And that seems to me to be pretty sovereign."

I'd like to follow up with answer that you gave to Senator Levin's question early on in this hearing. And specifically, are you saying in response to Senator Levin's question, are you saying that the interim government has no authority to ask us to leave Iraq?

ARMITAGE: No, I said quite the contrary. I said the interim government, as a matter of fact, could ask us to leave Iraq, and we would leave.

PRYOR: OK.

I'm sorry, I think General Myers maybe said that the current iteration of government there kind of binds the interim government. And I don't know of the legal issues there. But is there a difference of opinion between State and Defense on this question?

WOLFOWITZ: No, there's no difference of opinion. I think what General Myers was referring to was the fact that the legislation that is a product of the Coalition Provisional Authority continues in force, under this sovereign government.

WOLFOWITZ: There are certain procedures under which it can introduce its own decrees and change things and, particularly with respect to things like negotiating agreements with foreign countries, that comes in when there's an elected government in January.

But the basic point of sovereignty, which Ambassador Armitage referred to, it's the fact, but let's also say it very clearly, they've said now more times than I can count, "We need you. Please stay." And it's a fairly theoretical discussion right now.

PRYOR: But it may be theoretical, but just let me ask the question, if they ask us to leave, will we leave?

WOLFOWITZ: We've made that clear repeatedly.

ARMITAGE: Made it clear.

PRYOR: That we will leave, if asked.

And do we have a plan for that? Do we have a plan for withdrawal in the event that they do ask us to leave?

WOLFOWITZ: We don't think they're going to ask us to leave,

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Senator Pryor.

PRYOR: But that's not my question. Do we have a plan?

WOLFOWITZ: If we thought it was a realistic possibility, we'd develop a plan. If it were to happen, we would develop a plan.

PRYOR: So as we currently sit here, we don't have a plan?

And I know they haven't asked us yet, but I'm just asking have we done any planning for that eventuality?

WOLFOWITZ: No, I don't think so.

PRYOR: Last thing is, I wanted ask about -- and I know Senator Clinton would like to ask, so I'm going to try to make this brief -- there's been a lot of discussion in the media, at least, about Chalabi and what's going on there. I'm not sure that we've had a chance in this committee to really hear in the last couple weeks because we've been so tied up on the floor with defense authorization on the floor. And, Mr. Secretary, if you'd like to offer any comments on Chalabi, I just thought you may want to have a chance to do that right now.

WOLFOWITZ: Not sure what kind of comment you're looking for.

PRYOR: Well...

WOLFOWITZ: I mean, there are intelligence issues that I think are, frankly, the purview of another committee and would require a closed session. He's one of many Iraqi opposition figures with whom we've worked over many years. In fact, Mr. Allawi is another. The Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih is yet another. Contrary to what I continue to read in newspapers, we do not have favorites. We very much believe in the Iraqi people picking their own leaders, and that means you can't have favorites.

PRYOR: And, Mr. Armitage, any comment on Mr. Chalabi?

ARMITAGE: Well, our own, at the Department of State relationship with Mr. Chalabi has been well-documented. It was quite rocky. So I've got no new information on him.

PRYOR: Thank you.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator.  
Senator Dole?

DOLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I wanted to thank each of you gentlemen for your tremendous service to our country.

DOLE: Secretary Wolfowitz, I find it ludicrous that anyone would suggest that no relationship existed between Saddam Hussein and terrorists.

Senator Lieberman stated the case very succinctly by saying that the war in Iraq is the central battleground in the war on terror. And yet, polls show evidence that Americans are not making this connection.

The media has made an obsession about denying AL Qaida had any link to Iraq.

You've made references to several other terrorist groups, including Abu Ibrahim and his professional killer group that was harbored by Saddam, and making bombs today to kill Americans. Iraq was one of the five states on the original "Patterns of Global Terrorism" list compiled by the State Department, as I understand, in 1979, which cited Saddam as a major sponsor of various terrorists groups, including the PLO, Hamas and the Abu Nidal organization.

Would you not agree that Iraq was a breeding ground for terror under Saddam Hussein?

WOLFOWITZ: I think it was. Yes, Senator Dole.

DOLE: Do you not agree that the removal of Saddam Hussein and his evil regime was a positive step in the overall war on terror.

WOLFOWITZ: I absolutely think it was. And it's a step, though, that we have to finish winning that fight, and we have to finish winning the peace in Iraq.

DOLE: A Marine officer in a Washington Times article was quoted as follows: "The problem is that there's no identification system, so

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it is not out of the ordinary for a target to either not have an ID or to have several IDs with different names. Terrorists could easily be moving from town to town using several different names and appearances."

Secretary Armitage, do you know if the Iraqi government has a plan to implement any form of registration or identification program? And, General Myers, how are our multinational forces able to identify friend from foe or identify Iraqi forces from civilians or from insurgents?

ARMITAGE: Senator Dole, there have been discussion with the new government about a national ID that may even have a chip embedded in it. The discussions haven't progressed, to my knowledge, far enough along to be able to talk what the cost would be and how we'd go about this.

But, yes, we've got to find some way to register people.

DOLE: General Myers?

MYERS: In terms of identifying the enemy from innocent civilians, it's very difficult in Iraq, because the enemy hides amongst the civilians and will put civilians in front of their formations very often.

So the way they identify them is, those who have the guns, those who are firing back, they have the inherent right of self-defense of course.

And then, when we have very good intelligence and precise intelligence, then we can go precisely after them, whether it's U.S. forces or our coalition friends and partners.

But it's a difficult job in Iraq, just because they are not adhering to any tenet of the Geneva Convention. At this point, they're all dressed like everybody else.

DOLE: Secretary Wolfowitz, were you about to answer on that question?

WOLFOWITZ: Well, I just wanted to say, we discussed that subject specifically with Prime Minister Allawi when I was in Iraq. And he believes, what we're calling biometric IDs of some form would be very, very helpful in improving the security situation; so do our commanders, by the way.

I don't mean to interrupt your questions. But could I say something? I mean, I think it's important, in looking at this overall issue of the relationship between the Iraqi regime and terrorists of various kinds, and you correctly point out there are various kinds, in fact, Abu Ibrahim, whom you mention, is a recognized Palestinian explosives expert who has been in Iraq for, I think, the better part of the last couple decades.

His organization, called the 15 May Organization, was basically just a branch of the Iraqi intelligence. And this year coalition forces conducted a raid in the vicinity of Mosul that disrupted a bomb-making shop that is attributed to his work.

So it's been a killer regime that works with killers of various kinds.

And the question I want to put in perspective is: What is the standard of proof?

I mean, we seem at times to be going back to the idea that fighting terrorism is a law enforcement operation. And until you can prove involvement beyond a reasonable doubt, you shouldn't do anything.

And I would go back to what we heard repeatedly and still hear sometimes from the 9/11 commission about the need to connect the dots here, and the fact that there was ambiguous information before September 11th, that in hindsight I think most of us wish we might have done Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan three years earlier instead of in 2001.

WOLFOWITZ: It's a very difficult subject, and there's enormous uncertainty. Intelligence is not legal proof. It presents contradictory facts. You have to assess them. You have to weigh

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them. And then you have to attach probabilities to them. But for me, and I think for many other people, the level of tolerance that we could have for states supporting terrorism in the way that Saddam was supporting terrorism just changed dramatically when we saw what terrorists could do to us on September 11th.

DOLE: Thank you very much.

Let me say, too, that I respect your apology to the media regarding (OFF-MIKE) comments made about their coverage. However, I think your comments were taken out of context. And I can relate to your frustration because press coverage of the war has been skewed. For example, the coverage of the 9/11 commission, in my view, has been outrageous.

Now, building on what Senator Sessions mentioned while I was presiding, between May 4th and yesterday The Washington Post ran 399 stories about Abu Ghraib, and the New York Times ran 437 stories during the same period. However, the documentary highlighting atrocities under Saddam Hussein in that same prison received little or no coverage by the mainstream media.

Can you speak to the significance of that documentary, the Don North documentary?

WOLFOWITZ: This is the one that talks about the seven Iraqis who had their hands cut off?

DOLE: That's right.

WOLFOWITZ: I haven't seen it. I've heard about it. I've met the seven Iraqi businessmen who were picked up in the mid-'90s, I think because Saddam wanted to be able to blame the state of his economy on somebody else, and he said it's because these people were engaged in black market currency activities, and they had their right arms amputated, all seven of them. They, fortunately, through some American benefactors, they were taken to Texas and they recently had artificial limbs provided.

But the shocking thing is that kind of cruelty, that kind of brutality was mild in Saddam's era. Senator Lieberman, Senator Sessions and Senator Santorum the other day, I think -- again, I didn't see it, I've read about it, although it's hard to read about it, there's been almost no mention of it anywhere in the press -- gave a press conference in which, I understand, they showed a four- or five-minute video that showed the various kinds of things that the Fedayeen Saddam did to their own people if they were suspected of not carrying out their missions, one man having his arms broken, somebody having his tongue cut out.

WOLFOWITZ: You can read about it. It's hideous enough to read it without seeing it. But it does seem to me that it introduces a kind of distortion when there's virtually no coverage of that. This is not to say that we hold ourselves to that standard. Absolutely not. I mean, what took place in Abu Ghraib, as the secretary of defense has said, is a body blow. We are investigating it. We're going to discipline people and punish people appropriately. But I think unless you really understand just how horrible the old Iraq was, American people are going to have trouble understanding the incredible courage with which so many Iraqis are stepping forward to create and defend a new Iraq.

But that is what gives me great hope.

DOLE: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Clinton?

CLINTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I apologize for not being able to get here earlier. I thank each of our witnesses for once again appearing before this committee.

Secretary Wolfowitz, you know that on several occasions both I and others have raised predictions and comments you made before the action commenced in Iraq. Just as an example, on February 19th, 2003, on National Public Radio, you said, "We're not talking about the



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occupation of Iraq. We're talking about the liberation of Iraq. Therefore, when that regime is removed, we will find the Iraqi population basically welcoming us as liberators"

In your speech before the VFW in March of 2003 you said the Iraqi people understand what this crisis is about. "Like the people of France in the 1940s, they view us as their hoped-for liberator. They know America will not come as a conqueror."

It's not only comments from you, but others in the administration, such as Vice President Cheney on "Meet the Press," March 16th, 2003. "The read we get on the people of Iraq is there is no question but that they want to get rid of Saddam Hussein, and will welcome us as liberators when we come to do that." Were those statements by you and others in the administration based on intelligence, CIA intelligence, or other intelligence agency analysis?

WOLFOVITZ: Senator Clinton, the Iraqi people in overwhelming numbers did welcome us as liberators. If you go back and read the headlines from any American newspaper on April 9th, April 10th of people cheering us in the streets of Baghdad and all over the country. They were dying for liberation.

But two things happened. Saddam and his people didn't quit on April 9th. They continue to fight. And we acquired this very burdensome label of being an occupying power. They wanted to be liberated, not occupied.

And I think that's why what's going to happen on July 1st is so important, that they will be a free country. They will have their own government. We will not be the occupiers, we will be supporting that government.

And the reason -- I think you weren't -- well, you weren't here when we talked about it -- I was struck during the course of four days in Iraq at how many Iraqis we encountered who were ready to risk their lives for this new Iraq.

We met a young Marine private first class in Fallujah whose life had been saved by five Iraqi Civil Defense Corps members who had put their own lives at risk to rescue him.

We met with the prime minister, Prime Minister Allawi, who was almost chopped to death with an ax by one of Saddam's murderers in 1979, and who is still the number one target of Mr. Zarqawi, and whose life is in danger every day.

The president of Iraq, Ghazi al-Yawer, whose predecessor was assassinated in a car bomb just a couple of months ago.

And this one particularly moving example, which I'll repeat because you weren't here, a young Iraqi interpreter working with our military up in Mosul whose sister was murdered a few weeks ago because she was working with us. And when the general who was with me, who knew her from before, asked her why she continued to put her life in danger this way, she said, "Because my father told me, we mustn't retreat in the face of evil."

We are confronting an evil enemy. The Iraqi people are confronting an evil enemy. Those people in overwhelming numbers still want to be liberated from that enemy.

I think it was a mayor of a town near Fallujah that said to General Mattis, "In my heart I want you to leave right now, but in my head I know we need you for a while longer."

I mean, that's the dilemma of this situation, that it's both our vulnerability and our great strength that we are facing an enemy that is tenacious, that kills very effectively, that has no scruples about killing innocents.

WOLFOVITZ: But that is also our strength, because the overwhelming majority of Iraqis don't want that.

CLINTON: Well, Mr. Secretary, based on that description, in retrospect, could we have avoided certain of the unfavorable consequences that you have just described if we had had more force in the beginning?

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WOLFOWITZ: Senator Clinton, I think the notion that we'd be better off with 300,000 troops is wrong. I think, more importantly, our commanders, both General Franks and General Abizaid, emphatically think it's wrong.

You know, there were a lot of people, and I happen to have been one of them, who was pushing General Franks, I think it was in the November time frame of 2001, saying, "Don't you need more troops in Afghanistan?" And he was pushing back and saying, "I don't want to make the same mistake the Soviet Union made." And I think he was right.

I think the reason we've been as successful as we have in Afghanistan is we've kept our military presence...

CLINTON: But I'm not asking you about Afghanistan, Mr. Secretary.

WOLFOWITZ: I'm about to say the same things applies in Iraq. And General Abizaid will consistently tell people both publicly and privately he does not want to increase the weight of the American footprint on the Iraqi people.

It would have been much better if we could have been in there from the beginning in support of an Iraqi government rather than as an occupying power. But 300,000 troops, which no commander has ever remotely come close to asking for, would, in fact, have created more problems than it would have solved.

There's no reason to think that we would have had any better luck catching these people where they hide if there was a heavy American presence -- I mean a heavier American presence. It was pretty heavy. And what we need is better intelligence. I think one of the keys to better intelligence is more Iraqis on the frontlines fighting with us, and that is what we're moving toward.

CLINTON: At some point, Mr. Secretary, will there be any kind of after-action review by the civilian leadership in the Pentagon with respect to this mission.

You know, certainly those of us who heard General Shinseki, who at the time was the Army chief of staff, testify based on his best knowledge and experience the numbers that were needed, have to conclude there was, at least, a debate within the professional military.

CLINTON: Now, how that debate was determined, obviously we have a regime of civilian leadership, is obviously clear. But I think to dismiss out of hand testimony we heard with our own ears and testimony that was very compelling and led to the public embarrassment of a distinguished soldier is a little bit difficult for us to accept.

WOLFOWITZ: I'm sorry. I don't think to disagree with someone should be publicly embarrassing. General Shinseki was, in fact, disagreeing with all of his colleagues on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the combatant commander, General Franks.

Isn't that right, General Myers?

MYERS: Actually, we didn't -- as we discussed about troop strength with then the commander, General Franks, which we did many times during the planning, during conflict and then for post-conflict, and then later on with General Abizaid, the issue of more troops never came before -- never was brought up in our deliberations. Nobody said, "You need more."

It was General Franks that proposed what he thought was right. We'd have discussions and talk about it. And then we'd provide our military advice to the secretary and the deputy secretary. But there was never a push inside the Joint Chiefs of Staff for more forces.

CLINTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator.

You raised that question which is continually raised about General Shinseki's figure. And my own independent research on that reveals that -- I'm not questioning the integrity of that fine officer -- but I cannot find any trace of the Joint Staff ever discussing a figure of the magnitude that he mentioned right from that seat you're

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in, Secretary Armitage, nor in the Army, in its deliberations, a figure of that nature. If I'm wrong, let somebody show me the documents that support that anywhere in that building, that figure was discussed and carefully thought through.

I want to turn to this very important letter that the prime minister of Iraq sent to the secretary general of NATO and talk a little bit about NATO, gentlemen.

And if I may say with the greatest respect, it was some 36 years ago that I walked in the Pentagon and roughly -- exactly, as a matter of fact, February 1969, and gained my -- in the Navy secretariat -- and got my introduction to that magnificent organization referred to with the greatest respect of the North Atlantic Treaty alliance. It had unquestionably been the bulwark against the Cold War.

And today, I have grave, grave concerns. I pick up on your statement. I copied it down, Secretary Wolfowitz, "NATO's capacity has been whittled down over the years, and we all recognize that." Yet, here's this prime minister looking to NATO, as he should, because the image of NATO today is, I think, resting on its glorious past, which I cannot find today.

WARNER: And I say that, harsh as it may be.

For example, in my most recent trip here, a couple of weeks ago, into Afghanistan, and then into Iraq -- as a matter of fact, Senator, it was one year ago tomorrow that you and I made the first trip of any senators into Iraq.

My good friend and colleague, we've traveled together many times. But in Afghanistan I was particularly interested in the work being done by NATO, and it has been hailed. But I found two points that concern me greatly, and I talked to the senior officers, and they were very candid in their responses.

Number one, the NATO forces actively working in Afghanistan today, largely on reconstruction, each country sends what they call national caveats with their forces. And those caveats read like when we used to send our children to school. "Dear teachers, he cannot have this for lunch, and Johnny must be home by supper."

Forget it. I looked through these caveats, and in large measure they said the contribution of some of the forces -- not all -- by the member nations, we're not going to get engaged in the heavy lifting over in Afghanistan if the going gets tough.

If anybody wants to dispute me, do so.

We cannot constitute a force structure around NATO if we're going to have on the commander's desk independent sets of orders for the various components that go into make the overall NATO force.

The growth of the drug industry in Afghanistan is just exponential. Someone estimated 60 percent, if such a figure can be worked out, of the gross national product of Afghanistan now is derivative of the illegal drug trade, much of it in those areas in which NATO is trying to perform some of its reconstruction.

There's a projection for more and more NATO troops to come in, and each of the quadrants to be part of their AOR, yet I cannot find any clear evidence that the member countries of NATO are really in that planning stage to put those forces into place to result in the composite picture of NATO's role in Afghanistan.

And now they're called upon to do another mission. And it's interesting, if you read it, at this critical juncture in our history we need the urgent help of the international community, and especially NATO, in the crucial areas of training inside Iraq. That's not training them back in Brussels.

WARNER: That's not training them back in Mons, or whatever they might have as the areas, or down in the training areas of Germany. That said inside. To me, that's quite a bit of infrastructure, quite a bit of troop commitment.

Now, the combination of this national caveats, the combination -- and I've watched the financial figures over the years. The United States has kept up its commitment financially, roughly a quarter of

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the dollar figure, and these other nations have scaled down.

Now, take me on. Tell me I'm wrong. Because I see NATO moving down a path to that immortal phrase that I sat in a hearing room of the Armed Services made by Shai Meyer (ph) of the United States Army when he said, "We're a hollow Army."

NATO will become a hollow force unless some very strong actions and determination take place by its member nations and take place very quickly.

Now, how can we expect NATO to perform this mission given the current status of its inability to live up to commitments in Afghanistan? How can they take on this additional mission in Iraq?

WOLFOWITZ: I'm afraid I share your concerns, and my colleagues might want to comment also.

I think, to give credit where it's due, there are quite a few NATO allies in -- maybe it's not surprising -- it's some of the newer ones that are out there on the front lines with us in Afghanistan fighting by all the tough rules of engagement that we have ourselves, like the Romanian special forces I think have done a great job. But there is the problem that you mention of rules of engagement. There are terrific deficiencies in capability. And there is, I think, a certain lack of political will.

And I'm a great believer in NATO. I think it's remarkable, if you think about how this alliance has stuck together over half a century when people said an alliance of democratic countries can't possibly compete with basically an empire run from the center.

WOLFOWITZ: And we not only competed, we beat them. There's a lot of strength and viability in common values that we share together. I worry a little bit, though, that maybe some in Europe think that they can wall themselves off from the threat that in fact threatens all of us.

And you mentioned the drug trade in Afghanistan. That's a much more direct threat to Europe than it is to the United States, although it is a threat...

WARNER: I agree.

WOLFOWITZ: ... to the stability of the new government in Afghanistan, and therefore we all have a stake in it.

And I think you can't segment out different aspect of this fight against global terrorism or think that somehow, to use Winston Churchill's immortal phrase, "to think that if you feed the crocodile, he will eat you last."

WARNER: But I want to come back to this letter. What's the reality and the capability of NATO to move in, Mr. Secretary Armitage?

ARMITAGE: I think I want to take you on...

WARNER: Good.

ARMITAGE: ... if I may. We all have the concern about the hollowing out of NATO. I think we have to balance it by the acknowledgement that 36 years ago when you became the secretary of the Navy, the thought of NATO working out of area was nowhere. It just wasn't possible. And that wasn't on anybody's mind 15 years ago.

And so they've taken the political step of working out of area. What they haven't done is taken a funding step of bulking up their defense mode in such a way that will allow them to have the capabilities to continually do that.

Having said that, I believe that if NATO as an organization at Istanbul or after can take on the general mission, then this will give a lot of political cover to countries to participate. I think that is significant.

I can't speak to who is more capable on the technical assistance side, which is not a heavy troop involvement or who might have equipment laying around that would be applicable to the Iraqi forces. And that will all be discussed at Istanbul.

WARNER: All right. And I thank...

WOLFOWITZ: And that's an important correction Secretary Armitage mentioned. There has been some very dramatic changes in NATO's

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willingness to take on those responsibilities. I think what the prime minister...

WARNER: On the paper, Mr. Secretary.

WOLFOVITZ: Well, right, and I think what the prime minister is asking for there is not a huge hurdle to clear. And I hope in Istanbul, in fact, that they will get a significant positive response.

WARNER: It tends to be words, words, panoply sessions and all of the trappings. And yet, I don't see the hard facts of boots on the ground, of trainers to go in there and do it under the NATO flag, not just member nations.

MYERS: Mr. Chairman, the only thing I think I'd add here is national caveats, very serious business. You could have used the example in Kosovo. I think it was on our St. Patrick's Day when we had some disturbances, and certain countries couldn't respond. But the commander thought they could. But at the moment of crisis they couldn't.

WARNER: Because of national caveats?

MYERS: Absolutely. And so it put other forces in great danger.

WARNER: Correct.

MYERS: And it put the people or sites that they were trying to protect in great danger.

So the national caveats piece is something that NATO's going to have to wrestle with, because when they have the political will to do a mission, they have to follow up with the wherewithal for the commanders to perform this mission.

The commander of the multinational brigade in Iraq, the Polish commander, when I visited with him several months ago, most of his force structure comes from NATO countries.

And he has ministers of defense and chiefs of defense on the phone with him telling him what he can and cannot do with those forces. And that is not the way to be successful in the kind of security situation we find ourselves in in Iraq or in Afghanistan or in Kosovo.

WARNER: Well, I want to credit General Jones, who has been an extraordinarily valued adviser to our president and the secretary of defense and yourself and to the Congress.

And my remarks don't emanate or in any way reflect his views.

But I know he is concerned about these national caveats.

I don't think you have to deal with it. But you darn well just have to end it.

To another subject: And that is this committee has indicated it will continue, Mr. Secretary. We're not on any vendetta. We're simply doing our oversight in this question of the prisoner issues quickly in Iraq.

We were told the Fay report would be issued. This committee, the secretary indicated through his spokesman, that this committee would promptly receive the Fay report.

We now learn that that is going to be delayed while a new layer is brought in. General Kearns (ph) becomes acting overseer of this.

WARNER: He's a very fine man. I've known him -- extremely capable individual. Another officer of a higher rank than Fay is to be brought in to do some work.

But all of these [\*\*\*\*] and so forth are lost when we stop to think day after day these articles come out in the paper just today about the problems over there. Congress, in my judgment, must be given the tools, the reports with which to do its proper oversight.

I think we should have had a chapter one, "Fay Part One," and acknowledged more was to come.

But can you give us -- why don't you outline the accuracy of what I said? I mean, this intelligence piece of what took place, didn't take place in that prison structure is kind of the road map to tell the administration and frankly the Congress, those of us that are interested in it, where we go next to try and determine what went wrong and how to see it never, never happens again.

So can you describe to me what is the status of the Fay report?

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It was to have been in the hands of Congress, early projection, by now. Could it not be indicated "Fay Report Part One," then a sequential report to follow, performed by another three star, unnamed at the moment, who will come in? Give us some clarification here.

WOLFOWITZ: Frankly, Mr. Chairman, I share your frustration because -- both because you're frustrated, which frustrates me, but also because we're trying...

WARNER: It's not frustration. It is we want to do a concrete and a fair and objective job.

WOLFOWITZ: You want to get the facts and we want to get the facts, and this delays the process. Just so we're clear, and I think I am clear about this now, what happened was the Fay Report was commissioned. It's an investigation and it's an investigation with potential criminal consequences that was commissioned by Lieutenant General Sanchez to report to him for action as a commander. And when the view was, well, General Sanchez's conduct has to be investigated also, then it's obvious you need somebody else in charge of the investigation.

WOLFOWITZ: That's why General Kern was appointed.

The question that you referred to about whether -- and you and I talked about this also privately about -- well, can't Fay continue the investigating part of it? Apparently the Army has decided to appoint a lieutenant general, Tony Jones, who is now at Fort Monroe, Virginia, as the new head of the Fay investigation. He is currently the deputy commanding general and chief of staff of U.S. Army TRADOC at Fort Monroe.

I will get a briefing from the Army, and if it's appropriate, get it for you to answer your question: Is there not some way to provide interim conclusions or interim results?

What I've been told so far by lawyers is that's virtually impossible in a situation where people are investigating guilt and innocence of individuals.

But I share your concern. I'm going to try and see if we can't do better.

WARNER: Well, I'll accept that answer because I feel and I've said steadfastly in the face of criticism of how the Taguba report was handled, I asked for that report, and you gave me what you had. And you had to supplement it.

Our procedures are scrutinized, as they should be. But I think the department has been very cooperative with this committee as it regards our needs.

Now, other documents have come into the committee. We had, I think, the start of an important hearing yesterday, which will have to be continued, on the International Red Cross and their documentation as to what took place. We're going to have subsequent hearings on that, or briefings, at the moment.

So I've made my point, and I accept your response. And I take it as continuing the cooperation that we've had so that we can just have the facts -- maybe not the conclusions; we're not looking for the final conclusions until this whole picture is looked at -- but the interim steps to rather than just read it day after day in the paper that dribbles out. We don't know the accuracy of those reports.

All right. Senator Levin...

LEVIN: Sure. Thank you.

WARNER: ... and then I have a question or two to follow.

LEVIN: Mr. Chairman, first relative to the NATO issue, I visited NATO, met with ambassadors to NATO, urging that they respond and that they take a role in Iraq. But, first of all, I sense that they needed a request from an Iraqi government.

LEVIN: They've got that now.

Secondly, though, I also must tell you that I sense some of the reluctance results from the kind of unilateral approach that the United States has taken to world challenges in minimizing the importance of coalitions.

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I still sense that feeling in NATO. I think we made some progress now at the U.N., but the feeling sure existed at the U.N. because of the approach we took to issues and the rhetoric that was used relative to old Europe, to Germany, to the United Nations prior to the attack on Iraq.

So, to some extent, the reluctance here represents chickens coming home to roost, in my book.

But, nonetheless, that's gone. That's past.

And, I must tell you, I think everybody on this committee totally supports the effort to get NATO involved at least in training inside of Iraq. It's critically important. It will, hopefully, then lead to some Muslim nations coming in also.

But, in any event, it is important. There's a consensus here that supports this effort to get NATO involved. I hope the president succeeds in getting them involved. It would be very important.

I want to just go back to an issue though, Secretary Wolfowitz, that we talked about earlier this morning, because I am troubled by your answer.

On the issue of the Iraq-Al Qaida connection, I'm not talking here generally about terrorism, which I happen to agree with you, there's obviously a lot of countries that have supported terrorism, including Syria, including Iran, including Iraq.

I'm talking about the allegations before the war that there was a connection between AL Qaida and Iraq, and that the focus on that allegation became a big part of the rhetoric prior to the war.

And I just want to pursue what you're now saying, rather than going back. I want to talk about what you are now saying relative to that connection, because I'm troubled by it. And I want to be direct with you about it.

This is what you said the other day at the House of Representatives: The issue of Saddam Hussein's contacts with AL Qaida and support for AL Qaida, if you go and look at the sealed indictment that was issued against Osama in Laden in February of 1998 -- and then you said, this is not me; this is the United States Justice Department during the Clinton administration -- said, now, you're referring to this indictment, said that in 1992 and '93, Saddam and AL Qaida came to an understanding not to attack one another and to provide mutual support.

You're relying heavily on a U.S. Justice Department indictment. It's been modified. They've dropped that allegation. It's been superseded by five other indictments on the same subject which left out that statement.

And yet, you continue to cite the indictment itself as evidence.

And then when I asked you about that this morning, you went back to a source, which had been previously relied on by the U.S. attorney. That source is no longer relied on by the U.S. attorney as a source.

And for you to continue to cite and indictment when that indictment has been superseded and modified to drop this reference to the relationship between AL Qaida and Saddam, it seems to me is disingenuous. And it seems to me that it is misleading.

LEVIN: And I would ask you, are you aware of the fact that that indictment that your referred to, the U.S. government document, has been superseded and modified to remove that reference to any understanding between AL Qaida and Saddam? Are you aware of the fact that it was superseded?

WOLFOWITZ: Senator Levin, the point is that what cooperating witness said and which was then, I take it, sworn to as part of the indictment is consistent with a whole body of evidence which Director Tenet referred to in his letter -- I don't know if it was to you or Senator Bayh on the Intelligence Committee -- outlining the various kinds of cooperation we had seen over the previous decade between Iraq and AL Qaida.

This is not the only piece of evidence pointing to some agreement in the early '90s that they would not attack one another anymore.



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There's other evidence suggesting they talked about mutual cooperation.

I happen to cite that because it's -- I mean, if we want to go through an intelligence assessment and put out all the pieces of information that are there, I'd be happy to do so. The basic point, which I've said earlier -- I think I said it to Senator Dole -- is I don't think this is something where you can prove things beyond a reasonable doubt. You have fragments of evidence. Some of them point one way. Some of them point another way.

But ultimately, a policy-maker, particularly the president of the United States, has to decide how much risk he's prepared to run based on the different possibilities. And this is not a subject on which I think there's perfect clarity either way.

But I don't think the bar should be set that until we have proof beyond a reasonable doubt that Saddam Hussein was involved in September 11th, then until then we shouldn't worry about the possibility that he may have been a source of support for terrorists. And Secretary Powell talked about very precisely his connections with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi that we saw in 2002. And I would say that everything we've seen in Iraq since the liberation of that country has demonstrated that there were these connections between Zarqawi and the old regime. And unfortunately, they've gotten closer.

LEVIN: Mr. Secretary, you can talk about fragments of evidence and talk about other subjects, but I'm talking about the specific subject that you rely on again, which is an indictment.

Now, you can go through other fragments and argue them if you want to, but that's not the issue.

The issue is that you rely again -- and you did it in front of this committee -- upon a U.S. government, sealed indictment...

WOLFOWITZ: Which was unsealed, of course...

LEVIN: ... now unsealed, which no longer makes the statement that you say that it made.

WOLFOWITZ: There were subsequent indictments that, I don't know why...

LEVIN: No, it's superseded. Well, I'm telling you it superseded the first one. Are you aware of the fact that the subsequent indictments superseded the one that you cite. Are you aware of that fact?

WOLFOWITZ: Sir, I'm not a lawyer. I don't know what supersede means.

LEVIN: Modified, eliminated, reduced, too, the place of, got rid of. Are you aware of that? It's a very direct question.

WOLFOWITZ: I'm aware that the subsequent indictment connected to the embassy bombings in East Africa didn't mention that.

LEVIN: OK, then you should not be citing, it seem to me, as recently as a few days ago, as the clear evidence for some relationship, which is highly disputed, in which the CIA, by the way, had very severe doubts about, but nonetheless you should not be citing that indictment. You, again, you talk about a U.S. government document to support a conclusion. And that document no longer exists. It's been superseded. And yet you still cite it. And what troubles me...

(CROSSTALK)

LEVIN: No, no, let me finish, now. What troubles me is that pattern of exaggeration is what has created part of the problem here.

We are all together on succeeding now in Iraq. There's not a difference on that. People can [\*\*\*\*] about cutting and running. Nobody's talking about cutting and running. No one's talking about Saddam being a monster. He was a monster.

We are talking about evidence that existed relative to the relationship which was used as the basis, since AL Qaida attacked this country on 9/11, that alleged relationship between Saddam and AL Qaida was used as the basis for attacking Iraq.

And when you still cite as evidence something which is not in

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existence anymore, it's been superseded, it troubles me because it's that pattern of exaggeration which it seems to me has been a consistent problem for this administration and was a problem relative to the assessment of intelligence.

WOLFOWITZ: Senator Levin, it's not exaggeration. If anything, it's understatement.

If we had a closed hearing and we go through all the...

LEVIN: On that indictment?

I just want to focus...

WOLFOWITZ: Can I finish...

LEVIN: I don't want to go into the whole subject. I want to talk about your reliance on an indictment and you reference to it and reliance on it.

WOLFOWITZ: Senator, can I answer the question?

LEVIN: Of course you can. But I wish you would address my question.

WOLFOWITZ: And you said this is the whole reason we went to war.

LEVIN: No, I said it was a focus for our going to war. That was the principal reason given for our going to war was the relationship between AL Qaida...

WOLFOWITZ: And that's not true. Our reason for going to war was to enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441, which had nothing to do with this issue. In fact, we conceded a great deal of our position when we went to the United Nations.

The president of the United States went to the United Nations in September. He had three concerns. One was weapons of mass destruction, the second was terrorism, and the third was the abuse of the Iraqi people.

We came down to 1441 which said that if he meets this last and final chance to come clean on his weapons of mass destruction, then we will implicitly work the other issues by other means.

And the standard of 1441 wasn't imminent threat. It wasn't large stockpiles of weapons. It was: Come clean and declare everything you have and do not obstruct the inspectors.

And I believe David Kay has been very clear, though he says our intelligence was wrong, he also said Saddam Hussein was in clear violation of 1441.

That was the reason we went to war, Senator Levin.

LEVIN: Thank you. I have one question for Secretary Armitage, and I'm done. There's been a lot in the press recently about the subject which the chairman raised, which had to do with the prison issue.

The Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice in early 2002 said that the president had the power to determine if the Geneva Conventions did not apply to the conflict in Afghanistan.

According to the reports, Secretary Armitage, the State Department legal adviser took issue with this determination, arguing that it was contrary to the official position of the United States, quote, "the United Nations and all other states that have considered this issue," close quote.

Secretary Powell wrote a memorandum to Judge Gonzalez in which he stated that the Office of Legal Counsel approach would, quote, "reverse over a century of U.S. policy and practice in supporting the Geneva Conventions and undermine protections of the law of war for our troops, both in this specific conflict and in general," close quote.

An article in yesterday's Post indicates the civilian attorneys in the Department of Defense sided with the Office of Legal Counsel on this issue while the military lawyers in the Department of Defense sided with the State Department.

The Washington Post also reported that after this dispute, quote, "Senior civilians at the Pentagon no longer sought to include the State Department or the Joint Staff in deliberations about the precise protections afforded to the detainees by the Geneva Conventions."

LEVIN: My question, Secretary Armitage: Is it true that the

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State Department objected to the conclusions of the Department of Justice and the White House Counsel's Office about the applicability of the Geneva Conventions to the war in Afghanistan?

ARMITAGE: It is true we had a different opinion, and we expressed it.

WARNER: Just two quick wrap up items, gentlemen. You've been most patient. We've had an excellent hearing.

Yesterday, my longtime friend, great colleague, Senator McCain asked a question to General Casey, and it was asked again this morning: What went wrong?

And General Casey gave his best response. Each of you have given your responses today.

A few nights ago, I had the distinct privilege of attending a dinner and speaking on behalf of General Tommy Franks. And I remember with great clarity how the Department of Defense, Mr. Secretary, was forthcoming as that whole plan was put into place, with regard to the military operations, General Myers, and how we were going to go about it.

A key part of that operation was the prepositioning of the 4th Division in the Mediterranean. And on jump-off day, they were to come down through Turkey and go into the northern region so that the enemy was taken on from the north and the south.

All of a sudden, Turkey said, no. And that was the end of it.

We had to take those forces and go all the way around down through the Persian Gulf up into where they finally came into country in the south when the fighting had been largely completed in that operation.

Had they come down through the north, they would have gone through that area called the Sunni triangle from which so much of the insurrection against our forces, primarily subsequent to the major operations, had taken place.

WARNER: Had that plan of the military been completed as envisioned and structured, I ask you, General Myers, would not some of this insurrection, if not a great deal of it, been taken out because of the movement of our forces, particularly as a heavy mechanized forces down there, so that part of Iraq could have seen the determination of the coalition, its weight and its might and its conviction? Had that not been stopped, might we not have experienced some of this "What happened" and "Why did it happen" and these tough answers that we have to face today? Do you share my view?

MYERS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I share your description of the issue. It's exactly, I think, right on. What I can't predict is what would have happened. But it's probably as you say, it would have helped somewhat with the current situation because that was the plan for the 4th Infantry Division. And it's a, as you know, a very powerful division.

But I don't now that we will ever know...

WARNER: Well, of course.

WOLFOWITZ: Mr. Chairman, if I could respectfully either disagree or just say that somewhat is a very small somewhat because think about Saddam Hussein hiding in a spider hole and what it took to find that man. We didn't need a big mechanized division to do it, we needed skilled interrogators pursuing from one place to another. We needed intelligence.

And actually, what I think would have made a bigger difference in another American division in there faster would have been a whole division of free Iraqi forces if we had been able to train them.

WARNER: Well, all right...

WOLFOWITZ: This is important because I think one reason to think that Iraqi security forces can do well once they're trained and equipped properly, is they speak the language, they know the terrain, they will get intelligence in a way that our forces can't do.

WARNER: But repeatedly our officers -- Casey yesterday, General Myers today, asking "What happened?" Well, somebody ought to mention that they planned this operation very carefully. And that was an

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integral part, that strike from the north...

WOLFOWITZ: Yes, you're right about that.

WARNER: ... 4th I,D. went on to heroically fight in the subsequent insurrection. So there wasn't any question about their ability. But had they come down through that area, we might have lessened that problem.

WOLFOWITZ: Lessened for sure. But how much, I guess, is what's the issue.

MYERS: Right, that's the issue.

WARNER: Secretary Armitage, I'll wrap up with you. And first, a personal thing. I know that you canceled part of your vacation to come and attend this important hearing today, for which I, on behalf of all of the committee and the Senate, thank you because you really carry a tremendous load in supporting the secretary, one of the most extraordinary men ever to be secretary of state.

WARNER: And we commend you, sir, for your public service.

But let's wrap up by your describing again the process that will evolve after the 30th, the sequence of a constitution being developed, the elections. And in your best judgment, is that going to kind of remain on schedule?

ARMITAGE: Yes, there are several things moving at once. The interim government from 1 July until the end of December or January, is responsible for running the day-to-day government, they are running the ministries, all of them and for preparing for elections, which we'd like at the end of the year, January, no later than January. Simultaneously, the United Nations will be helping prepare the electoral process, the registering process for this, et cetera. This month of July there is a preparatory commission being put together laterally that will form a national conference of about a thousand people, a thousand notables in Iraq. And out of those thousand people will be developed an interim national council of 100 notables. Those people will give advice to the interim government.

They have some duties. I have them here. They can monitor the implementation of the laws. They can approve the 2005 Iraqi national budget. They have the authority to veto executive orders by a two-thirds majority vote. And should something happen to the presidency, they can appoint replacements to the presidency council.

Assuming elections in December-January of '05, you will have a national assembly of 275 people which will be responsible for choosing a presidency and a prime minister who will then put together a government.

That government's major duty is to develop a constitution which will be placed before the Iraqi people for a referendum to which there will be a fully elected government in Iraq, following that new constitution. That's the process.

It's ambitious. The U.N. thinks we can get there. We're going to do our best to try to make the security atmosphere one that's conducive to holding these elections.

WARNER: Do you anticipate the U.N. will increase its presence in country and begin to pick up a heavy part of this responsibility to implement this plan?

ARMITAGE: They will pick up a part of the responsibility.

There's a great reluctance and understandable reluctance on the part of the U.N. after loss of Sergio de Mello to have a heavy presence there.

One of the elements of Resolution 1546 makes it very clear that the U.N. is encouraged to take this vital role. We are going to be responsible for assisting the U.N. to include convoy, providing fixed point protection.

To the extent we're doing that and other forces from other nations aren't doing it, that will detract from our overall ability to conduct security sweeps, et cetera.

But I think the definition of the word "heavy" lifting they're

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going to do is one that I'd quarrel with. They'll do some lifting, but the security situation is what's going to determine for them whether they increase the number of people in the country. WARNER: And that security situation is going to be largely dependent on the coalition forces in indeterminant numbers remaining there while the internal Iraqi structure of its army and other security is built up. Am I not correct?

And when you sort of sat over here and replied to some question a minute or two ago "It's going to be a long time," we're looking over that entire period that you just outlined now for security forces to be in place.

ARMITAGE: Well, I suspect, so I cannot give any numbers and I don't think Paul could either...

WARNER: I'm not asking for the numbers.

ARMITAGE: Yes.

WARNER: I thank you.

ARMITAGE: Thank you.

WARNER: I raised the question of the 4th I.D. because so often in every hearing, someone talks about the force structure and the level of force structure. Just remember that weeks before we started, a whole army division was eliminated for an indeterminate period of time from that operation.

Thank you very much.

(CROSSTALK)

WOLFOWITZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

END

U.S. SENATOR JOHN WARNER (R-VA)

Chair

Washington, D.C.

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